

J. B. John Bunyan
A N
Infallible W A Y
T O
CONTENTMENT,

In the midst of
Publick or Personal
CALAMITIES.

To which is added
Encouragement
AGAINST
The Fear of *Fire* and *Poverty*,
Evil Tidings, and *Death* itself.

The Third Edition Enlarged.

—But none of these things move me, neither count
I my life dear unto my self, so that I might finish
my course with Joy, Acts 20. 24.

By the A U T H O U R
Of the *Devout Communicant*.

LONDON: Printed for *Tho. Dungh*,
at *Chancery-lane* end in *Fleetstreet*. 1683.

John Francis Wainwright

IN
INFALLIBLE WAY
TO
CONTENTMENT

In the way of
Public or Personal
CALAMITIES

To which is added
Encouragement
AGAINST
The Fear of Fire and Thieves
Evil Thoughts, and Devils

The Fifth Edition
By the Author
I my life have more my self to than I might be said
my course with you Acts 20. 24

Of the Second Communion
By the AUTHOR
LONDON Printed for J. D. in 1788
at the Stationers Hall in Pall Mall

TO HIS
Very much Esteemed --
Mr. R. I.

My Dear *Adelphins*,

Were Books Dedicable onely to those that need them, 'twere difficult to find one, to whom the following Subject (*duely managed*) would be an impertinent Present. That I make this to you, is out of a compassionate sense of those melancholy, desponding Thoughts that have sometimes perplexed you, as well as my self: For which we may, 'tis true, thank, or rather blame, and condemn ourselves, that we have rendered our Lives so uncomfortable, by our unprofitable Solicitude: that we have been so unreconciled to our Condition, which hath hindered the sweet and quiet of it, and disturb-

The Epistle Dedicatory.

ed that calmness and serenity of Soul we might have otherwise enjoy'd: That we have no more cheerfully comply'd with the Will of our gracious DISPOSER, and thankfully imbraced the Portion He hath allotted us; whose Omnipotent Wisdom manages all for the good of his Servants. Our own impatience is our greatest Misery. He that is ever content with what he is, makes himself happy without a Fortune, and when others judge him most unfortunate. Nothing more general, than Complaints: and indeed, in a careless Age, no wonder 'tis so hard to find contented Minds, While we neglect our Duty, we cannot but be troublesome to ourselves; while we secure that, we cannot be much distressed in any Calamity. This, were there nothing else, is abundantly sufficient to recommend, and endear our Happy Religion to us; that the sincere observance of it, not onely prevents many Troubles, but affords support under All. Our merciful Sovereign's Honour, and our own Happiness, he hath joyned together, so, as no man can put asunder; nor

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The Epistle Mediatory.

be miserable in any Condition, without being Disobedient, the fatal Cause of being so in all. There's certainly a more easie undisturbed Passage through this World of Trouble, than most find; because they will not be at the cost and pains of a good Conscience; which intitles us to the special care of an All-sufficient only Wise GOD; and affords that inward Contentment, which all wise Men have valued above external Accommodations. And without all peradventure, they prepossess here an inconsiderable share of that future Rest, where onely are unallay'd Delights, who make it their business to be like the undefiled Inhabitants of it. We can justly complain of nothing that separates us ~~not~~ from the Love of GOD, who is perpetually concern'd for humane Affairs, and particularly intends their Happiness, who place it only in Him. In a turbulent World, in unsettled Times, amidst the straights and difficulties we are liable to pass through; nothing can be more desirable than to be above Misfortunes; to be free from Molestation and anxious

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Thoughts ; to meet all Vicissitudes and Events with constant equal Tempers ; to undergo all Crosses with becoming contented Minds ; to entertain the harshest Accidents with equanimity and acquiescence of Souls, wholly submitted unto, fully satisfi'd with the Divine Disposal : To which, if the following prove not an Infallible Way, 'tis because the Considerations are not well Digested, and rightly Apply'd. If they contribute any thing to your Contentment, it will be no small addition to mine ; for I am

YOUR very Affectionate, &c.

THE INTRODUCTION.

HOW great an Impostor is this World unto us? in the diversity of Reports and Opinions, in the eager pursuit of worldly Greatness, in the hungry thirst after carnal Pleasures, in the heats of Passion, in the crys of the Poor, in the oppression of the Rich, in the throng of Business, in the remission of Idleness, in the diversion of Friends, in the spite of Enemies, in the hopes and fears, joys and sorrows of this evil World; how few find Rest and Content? how many lose GOD and themselves? When I consider the usefulness and excellency of Divine CONTENTMENT; how necessary and profitable, pleasant and comfortable, beautiful and aimable; how it makes us Rich and Happy in despite of the World; fits us to do, and receive Good, and suffer Evil; how it frees us from Sin and innumerable Temptations to it; how creditable to Religion; how pleasing, how like, how near it is unto GOD: As also, the great troubles and burden, vanity and unreasonableness, hurt and unprofitableness, pride and unthankfulness, rebelliousness and unbelief, the sinfulnes, mischief, and sad effects:

II The INTRODUCTION.

of Murmuring, Impatience, and Discontent; how much below the Spirit, Profession and Duty, Relation, Dignity and Expectation of Christians; what GOD hath had, and expects from them; how dishonourable, displeasing and provoking it is to Him; how it impoverishes and beggars us; renders us incapable of enjoying any Mercy; excludes us from all true Joy, Comfort, Rest, or Safety; exposes us to all imaginable Mischiefs and Miseries: I am ashamed of my Folly; I am confounded at, I crave pardon for my Guilt: I am concern'd; I resolve to be otherwise. Such like Considerations occasioned the Collection of those ensuing: And were they familiariz'd, made part of ourselves; entertain'd with a firm unshaken belief of their truth and use, we should not be at a loss, where to run for relief in our distress; but be able (by altering and tempering the dispositions and inclinations of our Minds, Wills, and Affections) to be Happy in those Circumstances, which render others Miserable; to frustrate and elude the effects of the most common Causes of Grief and Misery; making them the Causes of Pleasure and Delight: those Occurrences and Accidents, Occasions of the greatest Joy, which imbitter the Pleasures of other Men.

AN

A N
Infallible WAY
TO

CONTENTMENT, &c

THIS World is a State of Probation; we live in it on no other Terms than to be liable to all the Hazards and Adventures, Troubles, Changes, and Vicissitudes, that attend Mortality; Vanity and Vexation, are the Essence of all earthly Things; incorporated into the Mass of this visible Creation. In the World you shall have Tribulation (a). The ordinary Lot and Portion of all those, the Captain of whose Salvation was made perfect through sufferings (b). To be offended at them, is to be offended; that we are Men, or Christians. It becomes us not to pore upon our present Evils, but attentively to look about us, and consider, what

(a) Joh. 16. 33. (b) Heb. 2. 10.

other

others have chearfully indur'd , and to upbraid our selves with such like Questions, *What then, are We better than They ? Art thou greater than Abraham and the Prophets ? Whom makest thou thy self ?* If you be without Chastisement , whereof all are partakers, then are you Bastards and not Sons (c). It's the Character and Brand of the Wicked, that, *They are not in Trouble as other men* (d). Every true Israelite, expects their Father Jacob's Legacy : *The Archers have sorely grieved him , and shot at him, and hated him* (e). And to find their days as his, not only few, but evil (f). Heaven's highest Favourites have no *Writ of Priviledge* , but the unspeakable advantage of making *them easie*, and *useful*, by considerate, submissive, contented Minds. *Patience* lessens pain and suffering : *Trouble* aggravates every sad Accident : *Contentment* makes it none at all. If we *will* it cannot harm us ; if we give way to it, we wound our selves, and joyn with it to make us miserable, and a single mischief, a great many : But, if we quietly sit still , and *in patience possess our Souls*, we are what we were before the Evil came, only our Souls have the Addition of the greatest Joy and Pleasure, by the Victory we have obtain'd over it , and our selves. The

(c) Heb. 12. 8. (d) Psal. 73. 5. (e) Gen. 49. 23.
(f) Gen. 47. 9.

greatest

greatest of our misfortunes is our impatience. Discontent is worse than any Evil we feel: Contentment is better than any Comfort we want or desire. How pleasant is it to a Christian, to find himself willing to be without that which he most desired, and to suffer that, to which he was most averse? Far sweeter than the obtaining and enjoying of that he longed for. 'Tis better to be Content through Grace, than through the enjoying any outward Comfort; *that* can Content me but in one particular, but *this* Grace in All; *This* makes my Soul better; the thing I would have, cannot. In having my desire satisfied, I am Content through self-love; but by this Grace I come to be Content out of Submission and Love to God, a Shelter and Sanctuary within us against all Injuries abroad; who fills the faithful Soul with his Peace and Presence: In him we find Refuge in our Dangers, Confidence in our Fears, Comfort in our Sorrows, Counsel in our Perplexities, Light in our Darkness, and Life in Death. Could we but as well rejoyce in our present Happiness, as he hath made provision for it, we could no more miss of it, than of that which is without end.

Encouragement from the Faithfulness and Omnipresence of GOD.

HE doth not set us to plow the Rock, to feed in a dry and barren Wilderness. He hath provided both for our *Safety* and *Tranquillity*; the *Covenant*, as well as the *Land of Promise*, flows with *Milk and Honey*: Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as you have; for, he hath said, (g) *I will never* (in no case, at no time, upon no occasion, for no cause, in no condition, respect, or relation, by no means) *leave thee, nor forsake thee.* (h) He may change his *dispensations*, but not his *affections, relations, engagements*; *chastise*, but not *disown*; not *disinherit*; *cast down*, but not *cast off*; *withdraw* for a time, but not *depart* for good and all: No, *I will not turn away from them to do them good.* (i) *My loving kindness will I not utterly take from them, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail* (k). He loves us too dear, indeed, hath paid too dear for us, to leave us in our *Defilements*, without *Grace*; in our *Disquietments and Dejections*, without *Comfort*; in our *Dangers and Difficulties*, without *Protection*; in our *Graves*,

(g) Deut. 31. 8. Jos. 1. 5. (h) Heb. 13. 5. (i) Jer. 32. 40. (k) Psal. 89. 33.

with

without Preservation and Deliverance. He will not leave us in Life; not leave us at Death; not leave us after Death; not leave us when our Breath hath left us: He will be a faster Friend than our very Souls are to us (l). He is with us and ours, when Friends (or we) are absent; Enemies, Evils round about us; who is most nearly related to us, who most dearly loves us, who will never be wanting to us in any thing that's good for us. In his Company there can be no Danger: If God be for us, who (what) can be against us (m)? None but such as must be against himself, nothing but weakness, nothing to hurt us; there's no room for doubting, whether it shall go well with us.

Estrangement from God, and distrust in him, are the causes of all disquietness in our selves. When we run away from him, we fly from our Shield, our Shadow, our Rock, our Refuge, and lose our Confidence of his Protection. Put on (saith the Apostle) the armor of light (n). Strange Armour, that a man may see through't! A good man's Armour, is, that he needs none; his Armour is an open breast; that he can expose himself fearless of any Injury: Who is he that will harm you, if you be followers of that which is good (o)?

(l) Gen. 46. 3, 4. and so. 13. (m) Rom. 8. 31.
(n) Rom. 13. 12. (o) 1-Pet. 3. 13.

He's

He's secure from any external violence, so far as it shall be never able to invade *his Spirit*, which is rais'd above this stormy Region, where Clouds and Tempests have no place: *The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness, and assurance for ever* (p). True peace is the necessary Consequence of Holiness, but dwells not, where Sin is not pardoned and subdued, an uninterrupted course of Piety maintained: *The Lord will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints* (q); but *no peace unto the wicked* (r). He who lives carelessly cannot be peaceable. There's no protection against fear, but innocency. *A good man is satisfied from himself* (s); *Neither shall they say, Lo here, or lo there, (is Happiness) for the kingdom of God is within you* (t). Labour after Truth, and Peace will follow. By not doing our own works, we keep the true Rest and Sabbath of the Soul. *To him that overcomes (himself) is given the hidden manna* (v). He can have no peace that lodges his deadly Enemy in his Bosome. He only can have the holy Spirit for his Comforter, that hath him for his Guide. When Religion is become our Temper and Constitution, and the Divine Will, our Joy and Pleasure, our full Content, our just Satis-

(p) Isa. 32. 17. (q) Ps. 85. 8. (r) Is. 48. 22. (s) Pro. 14. 14.
 (t) Luke 17. 21. (v) Rev. 2. 17.

faction; in taking Christ's Yolk upon us, by a pliable submissive frame and temper of spirit, a free sincere intire obedience to his Laws, learning of him to be meek and lowly of heart, *we shall find rest unto our souls (w)*. O the never-ceasing musick, comfort, and satisfaction of a good Conscience! It's our Suffering, Sick-beds, Death-bed Cordial; a softer Pillow under our *Head* (though that be upon a Stone, and we have no Covering but the Canopy of Heaven over us) than others can lay *theirs* upon, in the richest Pavilions, or most splendid Palaces: It causes the *Patient* to *smile*, while the *Spectators weep*; the *Martyr* to *bleed* with more ease, than the *Executioner sweats*: Is a *continual Feast*, when we have nothing else: Inables us to eat Herbs, and drink Water, and give God thanks.

Guilt is always terrifying and affrighting: makes great ones tremble in the midst of their Palaces; afraid of Death under the Covert of their gilded Ceilings: The cleft of a Wall puts them into a Fright; the clattering of a Shutter drives their Courage to a non plus; they fear their days to be at an end every time the Wind breaks a Pane of their Window, or puffs up a Tile from their Roof: Places of Safety are not secure to them; and

(w) Mat. 11. 29.

they

they are as much amaz'd to see the Tapestry slip from the Wall, as if an Earthquake had violently thrown up the Foundation of their Dwelling. An evil Spirit (their guilty Conscience) haunts them continually; which all their Diversions cannot conjure down, or drive away; so that, though neither God nor Man punish them in this World, they can be never able to pardon (so not to enjoy) themselves. Guilt makes them think they still hear the noise and alarm of Wrath and Vengeance:

*As every flash of Lightning they wax pale;
When distant Thunder rumbles, Villains quail.*

Guilt and Unbelief creates all our Fears; makes us weary of the day, and watch in the night; our Sleep short, the Night long; our Dreams troublesome, our Watchings painful; a pale Face, a thoughtful desponding perplexed Heart; shuts up Heaven it self against us; makes the God of Truth a Lyer: Faith opens Heaven, glorifies God, fortifies, confirms the Heart, and establishes us; fills us with Courage and Acquiescence in him; holds our Hearts in a holy Tranquillity, amidst all the unequal motions of this Life; will make us stand upright even among the Ruines of the great

to Contentment.

9

fall of the old Building of Nature, when Heaven and Earth shall tremble and shrink, hasting to a Dissolution. He is sure to be *Fed*, who is able to *Believe*: Find out the *Word*, and God will find out the *Deed*: Tell him what he hath *said*, and he will *make it good*. He never yet was worse than his Word, or Compounded for less than Due, with any whom his Promise made his Creditor. *Joshua* challenges all *Israel*, to shew but the *one Thing* God had failed them in, of all the good things he had spoke concerning them; (x) *Faith* is the *substance of things not seen*; doubts not of Food, though we see no Corn; despairs not of Cloaths, though we have no Flax; wants not a Sacrifice, though we have no Herd (y). *Faith* loves no Disputes; hates all doubtful Reasonings, banishes all carnal Objections; sets not *Providences* against *Promises*; triumphs over all seeming Contradictions; looks upon the greatest Impediments, as difficulties which cannot check, but only magnifie Almightyness. There is no question left, where God's Promise is engaged; there are no Objections against Faith, nothing impossible to him that can believe; no Desert without Provision; no Dungeon without Light; no fiery Trial without Comfort; no valley of Tears without a door of Hope.

(x) Jos. 23. 14. (y) Hab. 3. 8. 17. 18.

Never

Never fear (saith Faith) to urge the Promises, to put the Bond in suit; *Thou hast Law on thy side*; Bills and Bonds must be paid; a good man, will be as good as his word, much more a good God: He that was so free, as to make it, will be so faithful, as to make it good.

Why then do we stumble at every Straw? Why are we of doubtful Minds? And why do Thoughts arise in our Hearts? We will then be distrustful, when we have a want, he cannot supply; a danger, he cannot prevent, or remove; a Disease, he cannot heal, or mitigate; an Enemy, he cannot overcome, or reconcile; a Red Sea, he cannot dry up, or divide; a Wall, he cannot throw down, or help us over; who sways the Scepter of the Universe, and lets loose, or binds up the Creatures Influences at his Pleasure; Keeps the Lyons from eating one Prophet (z); and the Fish from digesting another (a); the Fire from touching three Captives in a burning Furnace (b); supplies the *Israelites* forty Years, where they neither sow, nor reap, toil, beg, nor steal (c); alters the Course of Nature, and the Hearts of Men; removes all Impediments for their succour, defence, advantage; cloaths the naked Trees; reco-

(z) Dan. 6. 22. (a) Jon. 1. 17. and 2. 10. (b) Dan. 3. 27. (c) Deut. 8. 3, 4. Neh. 9. 21.

vers the virdure of the forlorn Earth; exalts the setting Sun in its Beauty and Brightness; spreads every day a Table where all may reach convenient Food; in the time of Famine plants a Corn-field in the bottom of a Barrel of Meal, for *Elijah* *; and an Olive-yard in a Cruse, for the Widow of *Sareptah*; fills empty *Naomi* with a famous Off-spring (d); gives *Amaziab* much more than he had parted with to the Army of *Israel* (e); and *Job* double for what he took from him (f); restores to his *Penitents* what the Locusts and Caterpillars had eaten (g); accomplishes his Promise of Incredible Plenty in *Samaria*, and rains it not from Heaven neither (b); recompences to his People the Comfort of Health and Liberty, which Sickness had impaired; of Relations and Friends, which the Grave had devoured; of Houses and Estates which the Fire had consumed: Builds his Temple against all Plots and Scandals, Weapons and Oppositions; discomfits the *Philistims* by *Jonathan* and his Armour-bearer (i); delivers *Asa* with a handful, in comparison of a thousand thousand (k); *Hezekiah* from *Senacherib* (l); *Jehosaphat* from the Children of *Ammon*, *Moaab*, and *Mount-seer* (m). There's

* 1 Kin. 17. 16. (d) Ru. 4. 17. (e) 2 Chr. 25. 9.
 (f) Job 42. 10. (g) Joel 2. 25. (b) 2 Kin. 7. 1. &c.
 (i) 1 Sam. 14. (k) 2 Ch. 14. 8. &c. (l) 2 Kin. 19. 35.
 (m) 2 Ch. 20.

none saved by the multitude of an Host • Subdues a mighty Prince by an Army mustered of his meanest Creatures: Routeth an innumerable Host with a few Trumpets, Lamps, and Pitchers; likelier to fright Children, than armed Men (n): discountenances any design, if his eye be but against it; if he but hiss, his Enemies come with speed, and revenge his Quarrel against themselves (o): Let him but arise, and his enemies are scattered (p). With the turning of his hand he turns them into Hell. Not a Creature in Heaven, Earth, or Hell, but have an ear to hear him; and stand ready prest, at his Commission, to perform his pleasure (when he lifts up his Ensign) against his Enemies, for his Friends. What can stand before a creating Power? Who can resist or oppose infinite Strength, and Almightyness? He can do what he will; and will do for his what is best, according to the Dictates of infinite Wisdom and Goodness.

Henceforth then I will employ that time I used to spend in disquieting thoughts about the things that disturbed me, in acts of Love, and Praise, Submission, and Resignation, Faith, and Confidence in God. I cannot want or abound, but from thee, who givest

(n) Act. 12. 23.

(o) Jude 7. 20. &c.

(p) Isa. 5. 26.

(q) Psal. 68. 1.

Christ

before

before thou takest, and takest but what thou gavest. Give me *what thou wilt*, so thou give me *Contentment* with it. Frame my *Heart* to my *Estate*, so I shall have an *Estate* to my *Heart*; and not *want* when I have *least*, because as free from desire as superfluity. Religion teaches a man to be without that, which others know not how to want; and, an Ability to be content with a little, is to be more truly rich, than the having much without being satisfied. I should be much ashamed any should be found more Content, among all those that have less. Had I *store*, I would not *impoverish* my self by *Covetousness*; now *poor*, I will not make a little, less by *murmuring*, but *enrich* my self by *Content*: So I shall have enough, with less trouble and danger, duty and reckoning: I shall never pay for what I have; I hold all in *Christ* our *Head**. I have all with the love and favour of a reconciled God, with a Blessing, with the Pardon of my Sins, with a thankful Heart, and as a Pledge of eternal Mercies. While others *grumble* in looking on great mens *Estates*, I'll *tumble* to think on their *Accounts*; and study more how to give a good *use* of my little, than how to make it more. Plentiful Provisions inhaunces the Reckoning. God's Bounty sets all his Gifts on the File;

* 1 Cor. 3. 21. &c.

the worst Servant *confessed*, though he *im-*
ploy'd not his Talent. Have I not more than
 I can give a good Account of my spending
 well: Are not my Receipts great enough al-
 ready? Must I complain that I have not
 more to Answer for? Rich men, like Sum-
 pter-Horses, travel all day under the Bur-
 den of some rich Treasure, at night lye
 down in a foul Stable with gauled Backs, in
 the Grave with gauled distressed Conscien-
 ces. Many at the Great Day will rejoyce
 they had no more, while others shall wish
 they had not had so much.

Encouragement from the Righteousness of GOD.

Consider his absolute and unerring Righte-
 ousness, whereby he is infinitely just
 in himself, and by the highest, most perfect
 Rule of Equity (his Will) governs all his
 Creatures: he doth them no wrong; he can
 do no wrong. Then, *Wherefore doth a living*
man complain, a man, for the punishment of his
Sin? (9) We are *[Men]* a Mercy so outweighing

(9) La. 3. 39.

* 1 Cor. 3. 21. &c.

any

to Contentment.

15

any Temporal suffering, as may well transport us with joy and admiration under them: *What is man, that thou shouldest magnifie him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him? and that thou shouldest visit him every moment (r)?* The Nobility of our Nature shou'd advance us, shame us, into a more chearful exalted frame and temper: We ought rather humbly to thank, than fretfully murmur against him; being so far from deserving any favour, that we are not worthy a blow: it's too much honour to us for him to contend with us; an ignoble Contest! *What is a man that thou visitest him?* Tutors, takes such particular notice, such special care of him, as to reclaim, or stop him in his wandring, and correct, as well as feed him; a sign he hath not forgot him. The Rod of Discipline in his hand, becomes a Scepter of Honour in ours.

We are [*But Men*] in a state of Dependence, Subordination, Subjection, and Suffering: And, *Who art thou, O Man, that repleiest against God?* Infinitely above us, unaccountable to us, supreme Lord over us! It belongs not to us in our militant state, to chuse our Station, but to behave our selves well in it. Every one must not, cannot be a Commander; and common Souldiers are

(r) Job 7. 17, 18. Psal. 8. 4.

B

not

not to Counsel or Dispute, but to Observe, and Obey their General; whether it be to fight in the Field, to dig in the Trench, or to stand upon the Watch. 'Tis as reasonable to refuse submission to him in what he *Commands*, as in what he *Inflicts*. The World is but a Stage we act on; it's very little material what part ours is, so we act it well: A *Comedian* may get as much Applause by acting the *Slave*, as the *Conqueror*. Every Condition hath an uneasiness; so that when we court a change, we rather seek to *vary*, than *end* our Miseries. We must expect Briars and Thorns, who have changed our Condition, voluntarily translated our selves into another Soil; and have no reason to be grieved at the native Incumbrances, and Inconveniences of it; or to expect exemption from them: to meet with nothing but the Pleasures of a Garden, who have turned our selves out of it into a Wilderness. Men repine at what is extraordinary, and unusual, not general and common to all. In vain we murmur at what is natural, or at what we cannot remedy; and afflict our selves with a fatal necessity, which involves *Monarchs* and *Peasants*. The *Philosopher* handsomly reproach'd the Impatience of the *Persian King* for the Death of his Wife, by undertaking to revive her, if he could but help him

the Names of *Three Men* that had *never grieved*, to Write upon *her Tomb*. *Solon* seeing a Friend of his much oppressed with Grief, carry'd him up to a Tower that over-look'd the City of *Athens*, and shewing him all the Buildings, said to him, Consider how many Sorrows have, do, and shall in future Ages inhabit under all these Roofs, and do not vex thy self with the Inconveniences which are common to Mortality, as if they were only yours. If there were (saith *Socrates*) a common Bank made of all mens Troubles, most men would rather chuse to take those they brought, than to venture upon a new Dividend. We must reverse God's Fundamental Law, before we can hope for a total exemption from Suffering. All that any man can aspire to, is to have but an equal share: and the generality of men have so; at least, none can prove that he hath not so. He's an ill Member of a Community, who would shuffle off all Payments in Publick Assessments: who, in this Common Tax God hath laid upon our Nature, is not content to bear his share. We must build a World apart, and not be content with the Elements that serv'd our Ancestors turn; or bear the Miseries of Humane Nature (since we participate of it) and be one of those several Companies of Mourners that make up Mankind, whose

showers of Tears almost every where water (not to say overflow) this Vale of Tears. When I have least, and suffer most, I will try how I am able to live with less, and suffer more; and evidence by my Chearfulness, *in that* some call Want and Misery, that *Happiness* consists not in Superfluity, or Ease; praising God for deeming me worthy to serve as a Tryal of humane Nature; to see to how high a pitch Patience can mount. Good men little consider *their Spectators*, that strongly encounter all Adversities. If the Searcher of Hearts found us not fit, he would never honour us with so hard Employment.

We are [*living men*] so may see, better days, or improve these to our great advantage, who might be past all possibility of retrieving our Errors, or escaping eternal Miseries; on this side, which, the greatest Evils are *below*, the least Favours *above* our Deserts. If our Griefs be *short*, they deserve no great complaint; if *long*, their lastingness fashions us to Patience. Life is dearer than any other temporal Mercy; the wages of sin is death: *But thy life will I give unto thee for prey*: was in God's account (s) enough to silence all *Baruch's* Complaints, amidst all the Miseries of a sad Captivity. And in most deplorable times, the Church is commanded

ed (t) not only to *bleſs* God, but to *praiſe him aloud*, for that ſignal Mercy, that God keeps Life and Soul together, and keeps them upon their feet; notwithstanding all the Rage and Violence of their Enemies: O *bleſs our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praiſe to be heard*; which holdeth our ſoul in life, and ſuffereth not our feet to be moved.

We are [*Sinners*,] ſo all the Plagues we are capable of in this, and the other World, are but *our due*: if he abate any thing of this, he *puniſhes us leſs than our Iniquities deſerve*: and we have more reaſon to *praiſe him* for his Mercy, than to *complain of*, and *repine at juſt and equal Dealings*. A [*man*] for the puniſhment of his ſin! if he be but a man, have but rational Principles, he muſt needs acknowledge the equity of *suffering for Sin*; and of being *patient under it*; whereby he endeavours to heal and reclaim us, if he be patient towards us in our ſinning againſt him, whereby we oppoſe and provoke him. The haughty *Monarch*, when return'd to his Wits, harp'd upon the right ſtring: *Thoſe that walk in pride, he is able to abaſe* (u). The *Heathen Prince* looked upon his hands and feet, laid his finger on the right ſore, when he ſaid, *As I have done, ſo God hath requited me* (w). The *Thief* had ſo much honeſty and ingenuity,

(t) Pf 66. 10, 11. (u) Dan. 4. 37. (w) Jud. 1. 7.

as to confess acquiescence under their deserved punishment, reasonable: *We indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds* (x). *Joseph's Brethren* hit the nail on the head, in saying one to another, *We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that, when we saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us, and we would not hear; now is this distress come upon us* (y). May we not all say, Am not I verily guilty concerning my Estate, my Health, my Reputation, &c? And will not *Conscience* answer, Spake I not unto thee, saying, Do not sin against it, and thou would'st not hear; therefore behold that also is required?

Whatsoever be the *Instruments*, the Lord is righteous: The stroke is straight, though the stick be crooked. The Equity of his Dealings is always visible, though the Reason is not: his *Righteousness* is like the great Mountains, when his *Judgments* are a great Deep (z). Though *Sin* be not always the particular Reason why he Afflicts us, yet there's sufficient Reason for it on account of Sin. He never strikes, but he strikes a *Sinner*, that deserves greater than he suffers. Without him I am nothing, I have nothing, I can do nothing, I deserve nothing, I am worse than nothing, there would be no loss of me if I were brought to nothing. I cannot date

(x) Luke 23. 41. (y) Gen. 42. 21. (z) Ps. 36. 6.

my Afflictions, from the first day of my pollution; or of my enjoyment of his Blessings. There are, that have never a good day in all their lives; not a day of health, gladness, respect, among all their days of sickness, sadness, and reproach. My *Sufferings* are not so many as my *Sins*, as my *Mercies*, as God may exercise me with, as have befallen others, as my Saviour's, as the Joys of Heaven.

We have receiv'd, we expect *great Things* at God's hand, but what hath he from ours? Would every man as duly ponder how much he is short of his Duty, as what he wants of his Desires, he would think it a very gentle composition to have the one unsupplied, so he might have the other remitted, and see abundant cause to sit down contentedly, and say with honest *Mephibosheth*, (a) *What right therefore have I yet to cry any more unto the King?* Doth he remove a Comfort we have not forfeited? Or, lay on an Affliction we have not deserved? Whole Obedience hath been in any degree proportionable to his Obligations? I may challenge the best man, to cast up the account of his best day, and tell me, Whether his Receipts have not infinitely exceeded his Disbursements? Whether, for any one good thing

(a) 2 Sam. 19. 28.

he hath *done*, he hath not *received many*? Did we diligently imploy our selves in reflections upon God's Mercies, and our own Guilt, we should find little leisure, and less reason to condole our Afflictions, but should divert our complaints upon our selves; and (seeing them both so numerous) be astonished at God's goodness, in continuing his Blessings in despite of all our provocations; and at our own baseness, in continuing our provocations in 'despite of those Blessings.

That every wicked Imagination, every black Design, is not at once defeated and punished with Infatuation and Frenzy; that every blasphemous atheistical Speech, doth not wither the Tongue; every prohibited Act, fix us perpetual Monuments of divine Vengeance; that every wilful Neglect, puts us not beyond all possibility of enjoying another opportunity for attaining eternal Happiness, (how much soever our punishments are short of our guilt) we owe to the lenity and compassion of God. Instead of complaining of so many Evils, I may well be thankful I lie under no more, who have deserv'd so much; and account every thing a favour on this side Hell. Blessed be God that he hath dealt so kindly by me, as to leave me any thing, and not taken away all, when all was at his Service. He sets down

Fifty

Fifty for a Hundred : his severest Dispensations are merciful Abatements of Sin's just Demerit. When my case is most sad, it might be much worse : he breaks the Staff of my outward Comforts, he might take away my inward Cordials : he afflicts my Body, he might wound my Conscience : this *Cross*, might have been a *Curse* : he ruins my Estate, he might remove himself ; lops off the Branches, he might cast Root and Branch, Body and Soul into Hell. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed ; perplexed, but not in despair ; persecuted, but not forsaken ; cast down, but not destroy'd ; pained, but not damned ; holden in the cords of affliction, but not under chains of darkness : were it *Death*, he is not yet come to the end of his Rod. The worst we can feel here, is not the thousandth part of what we have deserv'd hereafter. He visits our Transgressions with Rods, and our Iniquities with Stripes ; when he might chastise us with Scorpions, and take his Loving-kindness utterly from us. What's a Paroxysme of the Gout or Stone, to rouling on the scalding Billows of his eternal Vengeance ? A Fever, a Sick-bed, to a Bed of Flames, where the Fit never goes off, the Worm never dies, the Fire is not quenched ? If he will not *always chide*, *neither* keep his Anger *for ever*, he deals not with

us after our Sins, nor rewards us according to our Iniquities. Let it for ever check all querelous passionate Reasonings against him, who inflicts but *temporal punishments*, that might make us *eternally miserable*: corrects us with the Rod of Affliction, who might as justly break us with a Rod of Iron, and dash us in pieces like a Potter's Vessel.

Encouragement from the Sovereignty of GOD.

CONsider his Independent, Absolute, Unlimited *Sovereignty*. Discontent under Suffering, is a striving and contending with God; opposing and controuling his Dealings, as unequal, and unadvised; charging him with Tyranny; as if he went out of the way of Justice, when he treads over our Line, and transgresses the Bounds we have set him. It argues we would (if we could) *Revenge our selves upon him*, because we give way to that passion that prompts to *Revenge*. But, may we, that made not, govern and dispose of our selves? Or chuse our *Station*, more than we did *what Creatures* we would be? Is it not fit we should be at *his finding and ordering*, whose *Workmanship* we are? And as intirely render up our selves unto *his Will*, as we proceeded from it? Shall we not allow him

him the common Priviledge of all Proprietors? Is not his Interest and Dominion infinitely more Absolute, than ours, over our selves and ours? *May he not do what he will with his own?* Ungrateful Wretches are we! to be more sensible of the *loss*, than *enjoyment* of what he freely lent us for so long as he should think fit! to complain of that as *our Injury*, which is but *Restitution*, of what he made us not so much as a *Lease* for any set Term, without a Clause of *Revocation at pleasure*. The greatest *Monarchs* hold their Crowns and Kingdoms of him *in Capite*, and may be turn'd out at pleasure, at less than an hours warning. Do we look upon the Owner and Keeper, as if he came to Rob us, when he calls it in? and not rather dismiss it with thankfulness for lending it us so long? *Whose Will* should take place? *Whose Pleasure* should be procured? Henceforth (my Soul) deny thy self, or deny thy self to be a Creature. Be wholly at his Dispose, or call him not thy Sovereign. He will do what he ought: he can do thee no wrong. If he send, say not, What do ye? Losing my Life, or Livelihood; 'tis even as the Lord hath Commanded, and straightway let it go. Let there be no strife between thee and him, between thy Will and his, for he is thy Sovereign. Is not the whole Land

(O self!) before thee? Hast not thou enough, too much room already in others Breasts? Separate thy self, I pray thee from me, and I shall behold all the Plains of my lowest Estate, even as the Garden of God.

We can never have any settled peace, till we commit our selves quietly to him. Safety is furthest off from those, who so little esteem his Will, that they prefer their own before it. Let him see, that we can as composedly rest our selves upon him, as if it were in our own hands to do what we list: which is the only way to please him; and we can never be pleased, unless we think that he is so too. 'Tis the Usurpation of our Will over our Reason, which breeds all our inward Tumults, and Disorders: there's no possibility of curbing its Insolence, but by committing it to him, who can alone order the unruly Wills of men. He that in spite of all the Reluctancies of Sense intirely submits his Will to God's, God will send either some outward Allays, or such inward Comfort and Support, as shall counterpoise the Affliction he takes not off. And nothing but experience can fully inform us of the unspeakable calmness, serenity, and happiness of that Soul, who hath resign'd his Will to God: all his care and chusing for himself, is now happily superseded: he's stempred to no anxious

ous forecast of future Events ; as knowing, that nothing can happen in contradiction of that Supreme Will, to which he is wholly resign'd ; which will certainly chuse for him with the care and tenderness of an indulgent Father, for his Child that casts it self into his Arms. His *Honour*, as well as his *Compassion*, is concern'd in the Relief of his Homagers, and Dependents, who have surrendred themselves to him. Our Wills, that were before were liable to perpetual Defeats, in this blessed Combination, can never be crossed, controlled, or resisted. By this means, those things that are repugnant to our sensitive Natures, are yet very agreeable to our Spirits, when we consider, that they are implicitly our own choice, since they are his, whom we have deputed to chuse for us. And, having surrendred our *Wills* to *his*, we shall without much pain, let him take any thing else : let's but make sure of Resignation, and Content will flow in, without any further Industry. With our *Wills*, we shall certainly develt our selves of all Solitudes, Cares, and fruitless Anxieties, which perpetually harras'd us. Cast our Burden upon him, who invites us to it : and he who bears all our Sins, will bear also all our Sorrows and Griefs. It is our own *Will* and *Desire*, it should be with us as it is, or we fearfully dissem-

dissemble with God, when we say, [*Thy Will be done,*] And, are we discontented that we have our *Will*? That our Prayers are Answered? Shall we set up our *Wills*, not only against his, but our own? Be displeased our Requests are granted? Repine that his, and therewith our *Will* is done? Can there be any thing in the *Will* of God, his Servants should inordinately fear; the fulfilling of which is the care, desire, and business of their Lives? Every Commission is signed originally in Heaven; and God will not set his Hand to any thing that's really hurtful to his Children.

Though our troubles immediately proceed from second, from natural Causes, they are but as Instruments of his invisible hand, and govern'd by his Counsel, to do his pleasure. By being violent against the Instrument, we therein oppose the principal Agent. Afflictions are not accidental or casual, but directed, disposed, and managed by him, who doth nothing at random, or at a peradventure; but with excellent Wisdom, and for excellent Ends; even for the good and advantage of Mankind in general, and particularly of those, who seem most to suffer by them. Men are but Ministers of his permissive Providence, to put it in execution. He *Wills* that in Righteousness and Judgment, which

which they *Act* with so much Malice, Cru-
 elty, and Injustice. *Let him alone, and let*
him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him,
Curse David (b). He doth God's Errand,
 though he vent his own Malice. Which
 may well make us Friends, at Peace, in per-
 fect Charity with second Causes: to be so
 much in love with the *Will* of our heavenly
 Father, as even to fall in love with what-
 soever serves it: viewing them all in his Hand,
 readily doing his pleasure. 'Tis a childish,
 curriish thing, to beat the Rod, or bite the
 Stone: we will rather admire, and delight
 in their subserviency to him, than maligne
 their severe Influences upon us. Why repine
 ye at Injuries, Reproaches, or Sicknesse?
 Why trouble ye the persons? They have
 wrought a good work; they execute his *Will*;
 they have an Errand to me from him; How
 could they come except they were sent?
All Distempers march under his Standard; Ad-
vance and Retire under the Shadow of his
Command: the voice of my Disease is, Am
I come up hither without the Lord to afflict
thee? The Lord hath said to me, Go up a-
gainst this man and afflict him (c). The great
 God is willing to be pleased with what *we do*,
 but we are not pleased with what *he doth*:
 he finds no fault with our *Duties*, though ar-

(b) 1 Sam. 16, 11. (c) Isa. 36. 10.

tended

tended with many Defects, if done in sincerity ; we find fault with his *Providences*, though there's nothing in them but what bespeaks infinite Wisdom and Goodness: as if God were our *Steward*, not our *Lord*, we require of him with a *Confidence* proper only to those who ask *their own* ; whilst, what we offer to him, is, with such an irreverent careless hand, as if we meant it rather an *Alms*, than an *Homage*. Beggars must not be Chusers : he's a presumptuous *Child*, that will make choice of his own *Rod*. He deserves to be cashier'd, to have his Name blotted out of Christ's Muster-Roll, who is not ready chearful to march through all Ways and Weathers to accomplish his General's Design : he's of a degenerate spirit, indeed, whom the example of his Captain will not animate ; that will take no share of the Hazards and Hardships of his Leader ; that will not follow him with alacrity through all the Difficulties he traces before us : to follow him murmuring, not only extremely discredits him, but is all one as if we staid behind. If we bear our Burdens with a perpetual vexation, we deprive our selves of the Crown of Patience, the value whereof is Inestimable, as the force of it hath been judged in all times Invincible, and made the prosperous envy their Sufferings ; who on the Dunghil,

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in a Dungeon, at the Stake, have continued under more grateful, hopeful circumstances, than those that scorn'd, reproach'd, or executed them: fearlessly beheld the Racks, and Engines prepared for them; been thankful to those that condemn'd them; and regard their Executioners, with the same eye St. Peter did the Angel, that brake off his Fetters to restore him to freedom: chearfully receiv'd them, as those who brought the Keys of Paradise in the same hand where-with they brought their Swords: laugh'd at Torments; courted Flames; went out to meet Death in the blackest Dress: their Minds still remaining erect, and unbroken; bearing the weight of all Sufferings with Courage, Constancy, and Rejoycing. *Patience* hath cloath'd the Brow with confidence to face the Storms; to entertain the Challenges of Earth and Hell: and hath forc'd such expressions of strength and fixedness, as hath amaz'd the feeble World, and sham'd the daring Infidel into strange Convictions of the Reward and Gain of Godliness, and its approaching Triumph: whilst, all the Glory of this terrestrial State, is easily wink'd into Blackness and Disdain. So distempered, crazie, and rotten, is the impatient, unresigned Soul, that he would be carried through the World in a *Sedan*, being unable to be jogg'd,

or

or disturb'd in his way : to him, the Grasshopper is a burden, a light Affliction grievous. Every Minute of our Tranquillity is purchas'd with Patience. He that is sincere, and patient, cannot miss of Joy : he that shrinks from, and murmurs under his Burden ; on his *Death-bed* will remember, That, *by that time*, all his Sorrows had been past, and nothing remaining for him, but Rest, and Reward. Others suffer more, only the Patient receive the Advantages, and Recompence of Christian Suffering.

The unquiet Æstuations of our Hearts, are their unmannerly Replies against God. I see *his Hand* at the bottom of the *Warrant*, that keeps the Peace in my Soul ; and makes me not concern'd what I suffer, but with what Mind ; how much I make of it ; and shall receive for it : not to strive so much against *Affliction*, as *Displeasure*. Removing punishment, may leave a greater, though insensible, in its room. He shall not offend me with punishment ; so he punish me not with offending him. It may admit a question, Whether it be a more admirable Christian Exercise to *do Good*, or to *endure Evil* ? *Doing*, is but one part of my Work, I must *suffer* the *Will* of God ; which I may well with more chearfulness, because I can only in this *Life*. Let me suffer his *Will* while I may, I shall

shall but a while, but eternally do it without suffering; where my Passive as well as my Active Obedience, shall be remembred, and rewarded. The Almighty's Sequestrations, are but better Compositions. I know, all shall work together *for my good*; therefore, if it be for my *good*, let this Cup pass from me, if it be for my *good*, let it remain with me, until thou hast purged out my corruptions, perfected my Patience, beautified my Faith, strengthened my dependance, raised me entirely from all earthly delights, to heavenly.

O! when shall I have done quarrelling, and murmuring? Fretting, and repining? Carking, and caring? When shall I be humble, and meek? Conformable, silent, and dependent? Contented, and cheerfully compliant? When shall I, not out of *necessity*, or, with *reluctancy*, but *choice*; not only submit, but assent to, and justify thee in all thy Dispensations? Not only hear, and accept of the Rod, but kiss it? Look up, adore, and think worthy thoughts, and honourable of thee? When shall thy Interest be so wholly planted and established in my Soul, as no other may be able to grow there? When shall I quit all self-ends, and be freely at the disposal of thee? Reckon, and endeavour it as my only Interest to serve thy will? My greatest perfection to be nothing in my self,

to have nothing of my own distinct from thee, to commit all to thee, to be great in thee, to be filled with thee? Not to reckon any thing I have, but despise it in comparison of thee; live to, and for thee; enjoy all things as in, and under thee?

Behold, I stand ready here for thy Service; I am prepared for any Employment, I am girt for any Encounter; do with me what thou wilt; deal as thou plearest with me; raise me, or depress me; lift me up, or cast me down; lead me to the right hand, or to the left; turn me to what side thou plearest; I am thine, and at thy disposal: thou hast lent me to, but not for my self. If thou wilt afflict me, afflict me; if thou wilt try me, try me. If my Patience must serve thee in Poverty; if my Disgrace must glorify Truth; if my Shame must honour my God: my Poverty, shall be my Riches; my Disgrace, shall be my Honour; my Shame, shall be my Glory; my Affliction, shall be my Happiness; my Service, shall be my Reward. Use me as thou plearest, so thou use me to *thy Glory*: and so I am sure thou wilt; for, otherwise thou canst not do. Thou canst not deny thy own Glory, and therefore thou canst not govern me amiss, who always esteem my self well used, where I serve thy Honour in the World, though in the

the lowest Office, or sharpest Affliction. I submit to thy direction, I follow thee without reply, dispute, or delay, or hesitation; for, what shall I get by resistance, but to be drag'd weeping, and to bear, being evil, what I might do sincerely by being good.

Encouragement from the Wisdom of GOD.

CONsider his infinite Wisdom, whereby he distinctly knows all things past, present, and to come. All obscure Administrations which seem so full of casual neglect, promiscuous scatterings, and wild contingences, is no disorder to him but an admirable contrivance and regularity. The thoughts of Men, the hearts of Kings, are in the hands of God. By his certain dispose, there's a necessity in every seeming undetermin'd Casualty (d). He who is unawares, accidentally slain by another, is delivered into his hands by God (e). An Arrow shot at random, was directed by him to fulfil the Prediction of *Abab's* death (f). Amidst popular Tumults, and Inundations, Commotions, and publick Confusions, *the Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoyce, let the multitude of the*

(d) Gen. 22. 13, 14. 1 Sam. 9. 15, 16. (e) Exod. 21. 13. (f) 1 Kings 22. 34.

bills be glad thereof (g). Though things seem huddled together, and to run at random, there's a wheel in a wheel, (b) (that turns every, yea, the least wheel;) in them the eye of Providence, that with deliberate care, and forecast, directs them in their turning and revolutions to the best and most certain issue. *His kingdom ruleth over all* (i).

Which may justly check our extravagant thoughts that would either presume to know all the reclusive ends of Omniscience, or peremptorily judge of the fitness of means to ends unknown. And may reduce us (discomposed) to composed minds, notwithstanding all changes, alterations, or seeming confusions; to conclude *that* Oeconomy wisest, that's chosen by a Wisdom so boundless, that can at once survey all Expedients; and so unbyassed, that it hath no interest to chuse any, but for its being fittest. The *great Physician* of Mankind, knows their various tempers, and distempers; weighs and measures out the quality, quantity, and durations of their Sufferings: diets and orders them, as he sees most behoveful for recovery or prevention: is too compassionate, too wise, to let his *distracted Patients* prescribe their own course of Physick; or have their clamorous will: or, to decline our fond and pievish

(g) Psal. 97. 1. (b) Ezek. 1. 16. (i) Psal. 103. 19.

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Cavils, shuffle, and discompose those mysterious, profound Contrivances, whose Wisdom engages the attention, and exacts the wonder of Angels.

How long then (my Soul) will it be, ere thou make an end of murmuring words? Mark, and afterwards (if thou canst) speak on. Shall God alter the Methods of his governing the World, to humour and comply with ignorant, inconstant man? *Shall the earth be forsaken for thee? Shall the rock be removed out of its place (k)?* Shall the Ax lift up itself against him that heweth therewith? There's a Jest indeed! He that formed the intellectual eye, shall not he see? He that made intellectual Spirits, shall not he understand? He looks upon all the World at once, sees what reference one part hath to another; and disposes the affairs of particular Nations, and Persons, (how fatal soever Calamities, and their consequences may be to them) as may serve and attain his great design.

He overlooks Satan's Conclave, what evil designs are hatched and plotted against his People: and can, not only frustrate their utmost policies and endeavours, but make them frustrate themselves; to accomplish those very ends, they were design'd to defeat: So that, what they seek to decline, they pro-

(k) Job. 18. 2. &c.

mote by their striving against. Thus the contrivers of *Babel* went to make themselves a Name, and to prevent dispersion, had laid their Plot so hopeful, that they had engaged no less then *Mankind*; and Designs as raised, as their intended Fabrick, as *high as Heaven* (and so high indeed they built: for God saw them all the while) but the Policy of the ambitious Builders, being contrary to the charitable Decree of God, to have the Earth peopled; he made use of that very Conspiracy that brought them together, to effect that which they conspir'd to prevent; so that now, the remotest parts of the inhabited World, are but the Colonies of *Babel*, whose scatter'd Architects have indeed made themselves a Name, but upon a quite contrary Account than *they* intended, or expected. Thus, the purblind envy of *Joseph's Brethren*, having made themselves resolve to prevent his future Dream of Superiority over them, made them think, that, by selling him for a *Slave*, they had taken sufficient order he should never come to be their *Master*. His being sold into *Egypt* was made use of, by the wise Orderer of humane Affairs, to make him in effect, *Lord*, both of *it*, and *them*. His nearness to slaughter, his being merchandiz'd, his danger by the rage of his Mistress, his imprisonment, his suffering such

misfortunes as might seem an oversight and neglect of Providence; as if it had forgotten the promotion *Joseph* was designed to, did all mightily conduce not only to his advancement, but safety and preservation of that whole Family, which was then the visible Church. So that, if each of his Brethren had given him as much Money as they sold him for, it had not been so great a Kindness, as he received from their intended Cruelty. Thus the proud Favorite of *Ahasuerus* eat the Fruit of that Tree, which himself planted: questionless thought he could scarce miss his end, when he provided for *Mordecai* that fatal Gibbet; which if he had not erected, probably himself might have escaped; nor been forced to hold the stirrop to his only eye-sore, and to be Herauld of his Honour; and at last hang'd up a publick Spectacle of scorn and contempt, without any remains or appearances of his former Honour; unless this was it, that the Gallows he hung on, was so many Cubits higher, than for the Rabble of vulgar Malefactors. Thus *David*, after he was promis'd, and anointed to be King, could scarce live a quiet life with his Countrey-men: instead of being brought up at Court, as a King's Son, he had not the favour of a common Subject: but, hunted up and down, till at last driven quite out of his Kingdom, into the Wilderness.

ness like a common Out-law, and there followed by a company of discontented persons, ready, on every trifling occasion to Revolt from him (as before from *Saul*) if not, to stone him; spoil'd of his Goods, Wives, Children, &c. yet was this distress in the event contrived to his advantage: for, having afterwards pursued the *Amalekites*, he not only recovers his own, but an abundance of other Spoil from them, as served him for rich Presents, to renew and confirm the friendship of his Well-wishers in *Israel*; that after the death of *Saul* (which presently followed) he might by their free Vote, be chosen to succeed him. Thus *Jonah*, when sent to *Nineveh* about so weighty a matter, as the safety of that great and populous City, and that too, when their destruction was within Ken, but *forty days off*, that he should now make delays, flee to *Tarshish*; and upon such a streight, run himself into hazards; might seem to argue some carelessness in the Government of Providence; yet, this his offence was so wisely managed in the event, that it mightily advantaged the main end of his Errand, which, it seem'd most directly to oppose. His danger, and miraculous deliverance being related, probably by the *Mariners*, was a special occasion, his Preaching proved so successful. Thus *Augustus* in Taxing his Subjects, paid Tribute to the

the King of Heaven ; he brings Stones to build God's Temple, whilst he intends to raise his own Exchequer ; his Political Action, had an Ecclesiastical Aspect ; his end in Taxing the World, which was to fill his Coffers and enrich himself, is used by God as a means to fulfil the Prophecie of Christ's Birth at *Bethlem*. Thus the dissention between *Paul* and *Barnabas*, when the Christian Church was in its Beginning and Infancy ; that the two chief Founders and Members of it, should fall at variance among themselves, seem'd such an unreasonable Breach, that an Enemy could not have wished a worse ; what could more thwart the promulgation of the Gospel of Peace, than the contentions of those that preached it ? Yet, by these two parting asunder, like two mighty streams, spreading themselves several ways, mightily conduced to the watering the barren, thirsty Corners of the World. Thus the *old Serpent* himself, even in his chief Master-piece, found himself the most over-matched : no doubt he highly applauded his own subtilty, and seem'd to have taken the likeliest way devisable, to his impious end ; when, having made *Herod* and *Pilate* Friends (to make them joint Enemies to Christ) upon such terms, that the Lamb of God should be the Victim of their new Con-

federacy, he had brought the *Jews* and *Gentiles* to conspire against their *common Saviour*; ingaging them in a ruinous and tragic Conspiracy to kill the Prince of Life; and by that unparellel'd Crime, at once to destroy the *Devil's* chief *Enemy*, and make God *Theirs*: yet the Event sufficiently manifested, this pursued Prey overcame the seeming Conquerour, and made all his Followers, Sharrers in the Conquest: *Death* and the *Devil* by getting, lost the Victory; for, whilst *Death* fed but as a Waiter on Sin's Trencher; or, with *Noah's Crow*, on the Carrion of Corruption, the whole World was both its Slaughter-house, and Kitchen; but when it would needs (with *Judas*) be swallowing the indigestible piece of Immortality that could not see Corruption (the Lord of Life) he was choked by the Attempt; he broke in sunder, and all his Bowels gushed out; the Dead that slept arose; and that sting of *Death* stuck fast in that empty Grave, that swallowed *Death* it self in Victory: so that, all those whose sins are there buried, are enabled triumphantly to say, O *Death*, where is thy sting? O *Grave* where is thy victory? (1). *Pharaoh's* Daughter's heart weeps over the Tears of *Moses*; she pays his own Mother for Nursing her own Son; brings him up (1) 1 Cor. 15. 55.

like a Prince in *Egypt*, to be Prince of *Israel*. God makes his Enemies foster, and bring up their own Supplanter, and Destroyer. Where, ever the Church's Enemies are, in respect of their place; or, whatsoever, in regard of their persons; howsoever joined, or disjoyned in regard of their affections; all their projects and practices, even amidst their mutual Jars, conspire in a Sacred Harmony, as if they were entred into a Holy League, or Solemn, Sacred Combination for, and shall all end in, the good of his Chosen. Saith *Martin Luther*, to the *Elector of Saxony* (perceiving the Cause of the Church to go backward) Let your Highness be sure, the Church's Business is far otherwise ordered in Heaven, than it is by the *Emperor*, and *States of Norinberg*. And I am glad that Christ is King; for otherwise, I had been utterly out of Heart and Hope, (saith *Myconius* in a Letter to *Calvin*) upon view of the Church's Enemies.

Limit not God to means: let him chuse his own Weapons, to fight his own Battle. So long as he hath a Cause in the World, he can never want ways to maintain it, who by his Death conquered all his Enemies, and the Kingdoms of the Earth, with one File of poor Fisher-men, whose greatest Art and Policy lay, in mending their Nets, and lay-

ing Snares for the silly Fish. The Church's Enemies cannot approve themselves so malicious, as they are : He sometimes so holds them in, that Standers-by, think them favourable : *It is in the power of my hand* (saith Laban to Jacob) *(m)* *to do you hurt : but the God of your Fathers spake unto me yesternight, saying, take thou heed, that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.* Thank him for nought, *he could do him hurt,* but God would not let him. Let men use what means they please, he hath still the security of the end. Whoever rules, he over-rules ; and will prevent or order, disorders.

And, shall we have so fond regard to our selves, as not to be Content, that the *Wisdom* of God, should serve his own turn in managing All ? Be so narrow, private spirited, as to expect all his Providences in governing the World, should center in our present particular Conveniency, and Happiness ? Humane Events, and several Persons Interests, are so interwoven by him, that they have a mutual dependance among themselves : and their meetings, which we think *Casual*, are twice necessary, as his Decree, and for many ends. We must consider our selves as pieces of the Universe ; and Engines which that great Workman sets on going, for executing his

(m) Gen. 31. 29.

ends ;

ends; which being all good, all means tending to them, must be so also. We must therefore bear our Crosses, not only with Patience, but Joy and Thankfulness, as accounting our selves happy, we are Instruments in his Hand, to do his Work, and advance his Glory: which must needs highly please him, doing that willingly, which others do out of constraint. How great an Evil is Discontent with our Allotment? By desiring to have our Will in such a particular, we perhaps should cross God in a thousand, he hath to bring about; because 'tis possible, a thousand things may depend upon that one thing we would have to be otherwise than it is. I will be henceforth willing to be crossed in some few things, that his work may go on in all; and his end attained or furthered in *many things*, by the *one thing* I am crossed in. 'Tis impossible every humour should be satisfied, because particular desires, besides their opposition to one another, are inconsistent with the general design. That difference which there is between particular things, times, and persons, much conduces to the beauty, and conveniency of the whole; while some particular Events, singly considered, seem prejudicial. The whole Contexture of Affairs in their operation, shall prove in the issue, for the best to

those that love God. We forget we are all Servants to the same Master, who disposes all the Concerns of men by an unerring Wisdom, and is alone to determine the place we shall serve him in. We think, that Providence which governs others, should only serve us; and distribute to us, not what it, but our selves think good. We murmur at a *Prince* for indulging any thing to a private Favourite, to the publick disadvantage; and we murmur at God, for not doing the like. 'Tis great Insolence in me, to think he should be more concern'd to humour me, then those multitudes of others, who have the same appetites and affections. Most men desire more, but every man desires to keep what he hath; And, how should one part of the World be supply'd, without the diminution of the other? If God satisfie not all, why should any particular person look, that his appetite alone should be indulged too? The common Father of mankind disposes things, for the public advantage of this great Family; and there cannot be a more vile contempt of his Wisdom, than sullenly to dispute his choice and orders. Men look upon themselves as single persons, without reference to the Community whereof they are Members; else, they would rather endeavour to *become their places* wherein they are set, than be perpetually projecting

jecting for a *Change*. Would we honestly and diligently imploy our selves where God hath set us, we should find it a direct Road to Advancement; or to have a better effect, that is, sweeten our present Condition, divert our minds from mutinous reflections on others height, and our own lowness. God hath placed none of us in so barren a Soil, so forlorn a State, but there's *something* in it which may afford us Comfort; if we husband *that* to the utmost, it's scarce imaginable what Improvement, even he that appears the most miserable, may make of his Condition. But, if in a sullen humour, we quarrel at what we should enjoy, and will not cultivate our own Field, because we have more mind to our Neighbours, we may thank our selves if we starve, or die of discontent. 'Tis surely but a modest demand in the behalf of God, that we should allow him as much priviledge in this World, as every Peasant claims in his Cottage, to be *Master there*, and dispose of *his Household* as he thinks fit; to say to this Servant, stand thou, work thou there; to another, do this, and he do it; and would we afford him this liberty, there would be an immediate end put to all Clamours and Complaints. And, when we are content with God's Allowance, then like the *Israelites* Mannah, it is very good, there's a Blessing

in it ; but, when we will be reaching out, gathering more, or, would keep it longer than God would have us, there will be Worms (nothing that is good) in it.

Wish Events according to the secret order of the grand Disposer, looking on all, not as *Casualties*, but *Commands*, and thou shalt always have *thy Will* ; nothing can fall out contrary to it, if thou totally denyest it, and transform'st it unto *his* ; and *desir'st* no more in thy heart, then thou may'st lawfully ask of him in prayer. Let's not create such Diseases to our selves, as we cannot declare to our Physitian. When we Address our selves to God for Relief, let's seriously consider, and single out those desires that are worthy of that solemn deprecation ; and we shall then find, we have in that, prejudg'd all our former discontents, as frivolous, or wicked. And then, sure we cannot think fit to harbour them, but must for shame dismiss them, since they are such, as we dare not avow to him, from whom alone we can expect Relief. The more impatient my longings are, the less in Reason should be my hopes ; for, *Mutiny* is no such indearing quality, as to render any man a *Darling* to God. The discontented man, is angry with God, for which, to be sure, God is angry with him. Nothing pleases him better, than a quiet submission.

mission. Fretting never removed (but hath always weightned) a Burden; nor procured (but prevented many) a Blessing. The Father continues to correct the froward Child. Submission gains us the thing we desire, or what's better for us. What we get by *discontent*, we seldom enjoy with *comfort*. He will satisfy our Wills; when we can submit to his: not easily deny our suit; when we can deny our selves. None stay longer at Heaven's Gate, than he who will be serv'd at first knock: he speeds best, who delivers in his Petition, and stays, until God please to answer. We often shorten our Mercies, by hastning them: he doubles them, by delaying; and makes us amends both for our Prayers, and Patience.

No Policy can provide against all Events, but that, which advises us to forsake the place where they are, and so carry us up, out of our selves, and our own wills, into the will of God; where all is a perfect serenity, lie down in peace and concord together. To such, there is no Enemy, nothing is contrary; all things serve them, and fall out to them as they would; having no will of their own, referring all things to the will of God: to them there is no death, or slavery, but to sink down thence, and be engaged in carnal, uncertain Designs, and Interests.

terests. He that acknowledges God's Providence, Wisdom, and Goodness, hath a sufficient *Amulet* against all *Solicitudes*; much more, *Repinings*. We may well question our own Judgment, when we repine, that our Souls are secured at the cost of our Bodies: and that's certainly the worst, the unkindest design he hath upon us. Our stripes are not more severe, then he sees necessary, in order to our good. So that, not only *Religion*, but *Self-love* teaches it to be *our Choice*, as well as *his*. He sees to the bottom of us, and those things we desire, what operation they would have upon us: whilst we, that neither know our selves, nor them, make but random guesses, and worse choices. He's more wise to discern, and more careful to provide what's really good for us, then we our selves. He considers not, what might *please*, but, what may *not hurt* us; our *Interest*, more then our *Importunity*; whilst we might perish by the grant of our desires. The experience we have had of his Care and Providence over us, and the folly of our own Election, may well bring us to distrust our selves, and rely upon him in all our secular Affairs. We trust those whom we have cause to think understands things better than our selves; and rely upon (Lawyers and Physitians, &c.) men in their own Faculty,
be

because we account them more competent Judges ; And may we not much more here ? Shall we be prescribing to God ? Or be displeased, if his Dispensations do not exactly answer our Fancies ? Whilst we impatiently complain of our wants, we tacitly, blasphemously, atheistically tax God, to want Wisdom, Power, or Goodness, whereby he should supply us.

Encouragement from the Goodness of GOD.

CONsider the Love, Mercy, and Goodness of God. The Divine *Eusebia*, the self-moving propensity and good pleasure of his Will, first turned the heart of God, and combin'd his Attributes into a Federal Association, to work all one way, for the good of Believers. All his *Providences* acted upon the Stage of the World, are but several manifestations of it, in different dresses and disguises. Instruments of Cruelty are not in his Habitation. He shaves us with a Razor that is *hired* (n). And, when he causes grief, hath Compassion. The whole Creation is a visible Monument of his Perfections (Wisdom, Power, and Goodness) and a sufficient Argument and Foundation for our reli-

(n) Isa. 7. 20.

ance

ance upon him: *Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth (o).* He is good to all, but his mercy is more especially extended to such as are in a state of misery; they are proper, and particular subjects of his care, and kindness, and compassion; the *Fatherless*, and *Widows*, the *Prisoners*, the *Poor*, and the *Stranger*, he is the helper of the *Friendless* (p). So that, that which among men is usually the chief occasion to take off their affection and kindness, is a principle Argument, and frequently made use of by good men, to intitle us to his favour: *O go not far from me, for trouble is nigh at hand, and there is none to help me: I am in misery, O bear me speedily (q).* He pities, where others despise: he is concern'd, where men are careless: he fixes his eye, and opens his ear, where a proud Creature hath neither eye to see, nor ear to hear. The Poor are not forgotten by God's love: he respects the meanest Artizan, equally, with the greatest Potentate. He slights not the helpless oppressed. That which is a good cause in it self, is always so to him, be it whole it will. Whole Mountains of Gold, fly up in the Ballance in his Hand, against a Grain of Justice. He judges every man's right. He sees and pities the Affliction.

(o) Psal. 124. 8. (p) Psal. 10. 14. and 145. 14. and 146. 9. (q) Psal. 22. 11.

ons of the Miserable: He hears the Cries of the Indigent. The Sighs of the Prisoner, in the deepest Vault, founds in his Bowels. He whispers comfort to the doleful moans, deserving commiseration. *O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee (r).*

What means then these scruples of his kindness? These strugglings under our Burden? Why are we so prone to look upon him with blood-shot eyes, in the ruin of his Creatures? As if he were some austere tyrannical Being, apter to affright and terrify, than allure, and attract us; and had only sanguine Laws, writ with the Blood of his Subjects? Why must the smart of the Flesh, pervert the Judgment of our Minds? The feeling of bodily Evils, destroy all sense of his unchangeable Goodness? *What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil (s)?* Indeed, we shall receive evil whether we will or no; But, shall we not (kiss the hand, and) receive it so, *i. e.* in the same manner, with the same mind as we receive good? With heart, and hand; chearfully, thankfully, gladly? With much reverence, veneration, and respect to God, and his ways of Providence towards us? This were an absurd thing once to imagine; a blind man may see this; 'tis so plain, a fool

(r) Psal. 84. 12. (s) Job 2. 10.

may

may understand it: the reason lies all in sight, that we should *thus receive Evil*, from the *Donor of all our Good*. The least part of which we have not *deserv'd*, but much more than all the *Evil* we suffer, which also is but another method of doing us good. And welcome him, as well, when he comes to take, as give: Carve *Contentment* out of every Dish set before us: Chearfully digest the hardest fare: Bless God full or fasting. Shall we not eat the Crust with the Crum?

*Laugh we to lick the sweet, and shall we lower,
If God be pleas'd to send a little shower.*

How great a share may all, who are not wanting to themselves, find they have in the mercies of God, that consider the multitude, and magnitude of them? How much are they oblig'd by them? How *little reason* have they to murmur against him? How *much*, to be thankful for them? Due Proportion, integrity of Parts, perfection of Senses, strength of Nature, exercise of our Faculties, mediocrity of Health and Appetite, vigour of Digestion. Mercies in the members of our Bodies, in the faculties of our Souls, in our Neighbour-hood, Habitations, Families, Friends, Relations, Estates, Names, and Interest in the Hearts and Prayers of God's People,

People, (What a complex mercy is that ?) All our days have been attended with a careful Providence ; we live upon his bountiful allowance ; which makes this World an-easie passage to another. The light of the Sun, the influences of Heaven, the advantages of the Elements ; Air to breath in, Earth to tread on, Fire to warm us, Water to cool and cleanse us, Cloaths to cover us, Food to nourish us, Sleep to refresh us, Houses to shelter us, variety of Creatures to feed and delight us. How many lose their lives, to preserve ours ? How many Mercies go to the making up one meals meat ? From how many Countries doth Providence serve, in the provision of our Table ? What a complex of second Causes, doth God subordinate for the producing the coarsest piece of Bread, which the poorest man eats: *I will bear (saith the Lord) the heavens, and they shall bear the earth, and the earth shall bear the corn, and the wine, and the oyl, and they shall bear Jexreel (t).* There's not a Morfel we eat, but is provided in Heaven, before set upon our Table. Who can reckon up the mercies of one year, of one week, of one day ? *Good men thankfully observe them coming in every day by whole loads. Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with his benefits (v): and,*

(t) Hof. 2. 22, 23. (v) Psal. 68. 19.

never

never appear before God, but see themselves *incompass'd round with them* : *I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy* (w). How many Providences concur in one nights rest and protection? We have a stronger Guard about us, then *Solomon's* threescore valiant men about his Bed, of the valiant of *Israel*, though they all hold Swords, being expert in War; and every man hath his Sword upon his Thigh, because of fear in the night (x). We cannot sufficiently prize that *secret Mercy* that lodges with us, and gives us rest every night. How many burning Feavers doth cool *Sleep* extinguish? From how many *Deaths* doth that *Brother and Image of Death* deliver us? What a mercy is it that we are not nightly scar'd with Dreams, and terrifi'd with Visions? That *Satan's Chain* is not let loose upon us? That we *sleep in safety*, and comfortably behold the *morning light*? That sudden *Palsies* doth not unloose our *Nerves*, or painful *Convulsions* shrink them up? That we are able to descend our *stairs* without horror and confusion? That when we are down, some *Messenger of Death* doth not *apale* us with terrible Tidings, and give us a bitter Break-fast. That we have *Hearts and Spirits* to call upon the God of our Mercies, in our *Families*, as an Antidote against the

(w) Psal. 5. 7. (x) Can. 3. 7, 8.

Evils of the succeeding day. That we find
all our Household in Health, and the Rapines
of Night-violence, not stript us naked of all
our Goods. When we walk abroad, that
we suck not in contagious Atomes from the
Air, that the *East*-wind doth not blast us;
that sudden violent Rains, in hasty Walk-
ing, doth not cool our sweat into surfeit, or
that we hurry not the blood into fermenta-
tion, for new and surprising Distempers:
that the *Earth* we tread on, suddenly opens
not its mouth to swallow us up, as it did
those Rebels in *Numbers*: that we wrench
not our Ankles, or other Joints, upon plain
ground; and dash not our Foot against a
Post or Stone to our great prejudice: that
Tiles or Timber falling from Houses, the
sweeping of Gutters, casual Arrows, Bullets,
Stones, Fires, rude Men, mad, irrational
Creatures doth not dispatch us: an acciden-
tal Coachman's Whip, some great Croud,
some unexpected Disaster bring us not to
the Evening of our Lives. How insignifi-
cant would be our wariness, did not he
watch over us? That Lightning doth not lick
up our Spirits; or a hot Thunderbolt rend
us asunder: that we can repose our Bodies
in any grateful posture: that we have a *Ta-*
ble and *Appetite*; and are not unable to *trave*
a Blessing, or to *receive it*: that we are not
by

by Cares and Vexations within, rendred snappish and currish at home and abroad : that every bit doth not choak us : and we are not carryed from our Table to our Pillow, and thence to the Chambers of Death : that by stopping the Channels of Nature, we perish not : that by letting Blood we lose not an Artery ; or the cutting a Corn doth not rance to Death : that passion or hastiness doth not intangle us ; and our Words are not wrested to the losing a Friend, or raising an Enemy : that our Houses do not intomb us in their own Rubbish : the Fire doth not burn us to Ashes : Armies of Rats or Mice do not devour us. Yea, did we see the admirable Frame of this crasie Tenement of our Soul, and upon what slender golden Wiers, and nice Labyrinths, in those wonderful passages in the Clock-work of our Bodies, the continuance of our Lives depends, we should be astonish'd at the Divine Goodness ; and instead of wondring when any are taken away, stand amazed at our continuance one moment : for, if either the Vessels or Liquor in them, be disturbed, we soon pass away, and are no more : yea, if the inward Crasie of the Brain be touched, men of the grandest parts (were it not for the constant influx of Divine Mercy) would soon shrink into *Ideots*, and prove miserable Objects of scorn

and pity. We should reckon our mercies, not by miles, or hours, but steps and minutes. The very health, ease, peace, and safety of one day, of one night, of one hour, deserves the thankfulness of many. How many mercies in one meal, or meeting? If the evils we suffer, call for our Prayers, those we are free from, call for our Thankfulness. 'Tis as great a mercy, to be kept from miseries, as to be delivered out of them; to enjoy health, as to be recovered from sickness. One relating his great danger by a fall of his Horse; saying, *He never received such a deliverance: Yes, (answerd his Friend) a hundred times; so often as you have rid and not fallen.* God's privative mercies seem to contend with his positive. We owe none, for what we are not, then for what we are: not Dumb, not Lame, not Blind, not Deaf, not Decrepit, not Distracted, not tormented with Gout, Stone, Strangury, Ulcers; not fill'd with Bitches, Boils, noysome Distempers, not scraping our selves with a Pottsherd upon the Dunghil; not Harbourless, Friendless, Helpless, Easeless; not begging our Bread from door to door; not in Prison, not Banished; not in the hands of cruel Tyrants and Oppressors: and yet, even in such a condition the Church in Captivity finds out a [not] that exceedingly affected her, and makes her bear all with Patience;

ence: It is of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not (1) [Mercies] for the number, intimating a multitude of favours in this one Act of his forbearance [Compassions] for the nature of them which signifies, tender, affectionate Mercy. Our Mercies are more, and greater than our Afflictions; our Sufferings may be told, but our Mercies are innumerable: We have more left, than we have lost. However it is now, it hath been better with us; and why should to days sickness, make us forget yesterday's health; this days hunger, unthankful for our former meals; our present scarcity and penury, render insignificant, bury all our former ease and plenty? We commit new sins while we are unthankful, either for enjoying his former benefits, or escaping the punishment of our former sins; or, are negligent of our obedience to those precepts which require us to preserve an equality of temper in all the changes of our life, lest by repining when we are deprived of some benefit which we formerly enjoy'd, we take an unjust occasion to neglect our gratitude for having been happy so long. Nor is it so bad with us, as with others; How many better than we, would think themselves fine in our Cast Garments? Feasted, in the reversions

our Tables? At ease under our Sicknesses, Pains, and Diseases? Even in Heaven, if they had but the least part of the Remnants of our Fortunes.

But, as to *Spirituals*, the worst day in our week, is better then the Sabbaths of many of the Churches of Christ: the Gleanings of *Ephraim*, better then the Vintage of *Abiezzer*: which should make us overlook all temporal Sufferings, with a holy chearfulness and triumph: for the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: he will be very gracious unto thee, at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee. And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers. And thine ears shall hear a voice behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, &c. (2). And he became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction with joy in the Holy Ghost (a). Who can complain of temporal Troubles, who considers, how he is obliged by *Spiritual Mercies*? Our Election before the world, Redemption from the world, Preservation in the world, Preparation for a better world. Making lute to us, that we would love him: commanding us, to do good to

(a) Isa. 30. 19. &c. (a) 1 Thes. 1. 6.

our selves: *Intreating* that duty from us, that he might *Compel*: taking it kindly, that we give him of his own: rewarding us for that, which by his grace only, we can perform: pardoning us, when we fall short in our duty: giving us repentance, that he may forgive us; and grace, that he may receive us into favour. The liberty, ability, and acceptance of our Prayers; the assistance of his Spirit; ministry of his Angels; pledges of his endless love; restraining us from sin. His forbearance in the days of our Ignorance; unwearied patience, notwithstanding our continued Rebellions: earnest *Intreaties* of us, when passionately bent upon our own Destruction. Wholesome Counsels; publick, and private Admonitions; the restraints of fear and love. Continuing so many undeserved Benefits; pursuing us with his merciful kindness, notwithstanding our provocations. For those infinite favours, whereby, he hath supported our state, enriched our spirits, comforted us in our sorrows, relieved our necessities, blessed us in our places, defended our persons, &c. For what he hath *laid up for us in Heaven*; the very fore-thoughts of which, is sufficient to support us under all the hardships we can meet with, in our passage to it. How many millions of Mercies meet together, to make up the Apostles one

total

total Sum? *According as his divine power, hath given us all things, pertaining to life and godliness (b). Who can find out, not only the number of particular Mercies; but, the several kinds, and species, the various heads, the general sorts of those Mercies, that contain multitudes under them? Thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds (c), i.e. as immense, and unmeasurable as Heaven it self. David's Arithmetick fail'd him; he was forced to leave off numbering when he attempted it, and say, Many O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I should declare and speak of them, they are more then can be numbred (d).*

And now, shall we not chearfully receive an imaginary Evil, from whom we receive so much real Good? Shall we grumble, if he gratifie not a particular Appetite, who loads us with his Benefits? Childishly throw down all, if he gives us not that piece we would have? Murmur under one Affliction, and overlook a thousand Mercies, who have forfeited our right to all, and are yet kept in the possession of so many? Forsake the enjoyment of so many Blessings, to pine away in the company of our Wants? Neither

(b) 2 Pet. 1. 3. (c) Ps. 37. 10. (d) Ps. 40. 5.

look forward to his future, nor backward, to his past Benefits? That man's Piety was ingenious, who, having *one of his Eyes* put out, by falling upon his Staff, gave God thanks that his Staff was not *forked*, for so he might by that fall, lost *them both*. Set we our present Sicknes and Sorrows, against our former Health and Comforts; and impartially compare, the Mercies we enjoy, with the Miseries we undergo; and our Consolations will be found much more to abound then our Sufferings.

Let us therefore be more careful to keep a reckoning of the *Goods* we enjoy, then we have lost: and entertain more joy we had them so long; then sadness, we lost them so soon: so shall we make present ill days good, by a thankful remembrance of good days past, and obtain of him new matter of thanks. Using the World as a *Feast*, soberly, chearfully feeding on the Fare set before us; and when it's taken away, Rise and give Thanks; and not be such ungrateful Guests to the *Master of the Feast*, that hath so liberally treated us, as to reckon all past, for nothing, but grudge when he takes away, instead of thanking him for his good Cheer. Shall we make earnest sute to him, when we would borrow, and be offended with him when we are call'd to pay? He's
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an ill, ungrateful Debtor, from whom the Lender cannot ask his own, but shall be like thereby to lose a Friend. Let's cast our eye upon what we have, and could not well be without, as well as upon what we fain would have, but may want : and consider, how useful the things we already have, are ; how ill we could spare them ; how much worse we should be, then now we are, without them ; how many want them ; how thankful they would be for them : no room then will be found for murmuring. *Thankfulness* will insensibly undermine our *Impatience* ; it being impossible to be at once, *thankful*, and *murmuring*. Every continuance of his *Mercies*, is a *new Donation* : And, shall we take no notice of them, because they are common ? Shall his Blessings grow invisible, by their being always before us ? Shall he lose his Thanks, by multiplying his Favours ? Whatsoever we receive, is still upon account of new Bounty ; an Alms, not a Tribute or Reward from him, from whom we receive our Being, to whom we owe our selves, but can claim nothing from him.

We make some formal Acknowledgments ; we customarily *give Thanks* at our *Meals*, that we receive all from him : yet, certainly, he cannot be thought to do *that in earnest*, that hath all the time of his eating been grumbling,

that his Table abounds not with such Delicacies as his Neighbours. God loves a chearful Receiver, as well as a chearful Giver. He that hath least, hath enough to oblige, not only *acquiescence*, but *thankfulness*. Tho' he hath not all he wishes, yet he hath that which is more valuable, then that he complains to want, enough to satisfie an humble modest mind: and which he himself could less spare, were he put to his choice. Let him but consider how many undeserved Blessings he daily enjoys; and, whether those he so impatiently raves after, be not much inferior to them: whether he would quit all those he hath, for them he wants; and if he would not; then let him judge, how unreasonable his Repinings are, when himself confesses he hath the better part of worldly Happiness, and never any man living, had all. The very consideration of the undeserved Mercies we have enjoy'd, should alleviate all our present Sufferings. I have made an ill use of thy Mercies, if I have not learn'd to be content with thy Corrections; and be not so thankful for past Favours, that the memory of them be able to put away the sense of present Miseries. Considering the good I undeservedly enjoy, and the evil I suffer not, but deserve, and others groan under; I will reckon every Evil I am free from

so many new Favours, easie Corrections, among my Blessings, and any Blessing infinitely obliging: and trust God in all Conditions; and rejoyce in that trust; and hope even against hope; and be *Content* in the greatest streights, when there's nothing visible that should give *Contentment*. *Content*, to do well, and suffer ill; to be neglected and despised, where we deserve honour and advancement; to be poor, without advantages of growing rich; to be sick and afflicted, without hopes of recovering health and felicity in this World; to see our friends wronged; our enemies prosper; our estate decay; and our charges increase.

All things are permitted, acted, or disposed by him, who is wisdom and goodness it self, and so, are the result of the most perfect wisdom and goodness; though short-sighted Creatures cannot see it: and shall work together for our good, (so long as we keep close to our Sovereign good) to heal, or quicken; try, or discover; sanctifie, or prepare; the fruit of infinite love, and tryal of ours. We should lay up in the Ark of our Memories, not only the *Pot of Mannah*, the Bread of Life; but, even *Aaron's Rod*, the Scourges of Correction; which should be so far from abating, that they should quicken and heighten the sense of Mercy, and make

us look upon them as additional Mercies: I know, O Lord, that thy judgments, are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me (e). The Lord forgive (saith a Martyr) my unthankfulness for persecution. Job (f) blesses God not only at, but after meat; for all was taken away. And, Thus saith the Lord, so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place, into the land of the Chaldeans [for their good] (g). The paths of Mercy are often intricate: God led his people by the right (or a straight) way, saith the Psalmist; but very crooked and winding, according to the stations set down by Moses. The cloudy Pillar gives them many a weary turn, to chastise their crooked hearts. Their Journey takes them up forty years, which might have been dispatched in fewer days. Were the World so good as its Admirers esteem, St. Peter should not have been in such want of it, as to say, silver and gold have I none (h). Nor would the Devil ever made that offer, all these things will I give thee (i). Afflictions are Federal Dispensations; not so much threatn'd, as promis'd to Christ's Seed (k), reckon'd a special priviledge (l), and sanctifi'd, better then

(e) Ps. 119. 75. (f) Job 1. 21. (g) Jer. 24. 5 (h) Acts 3. 6. (i) Mat. 4. 9. (k) Ps. 89. 32. and 119. 75. Heb. 12. 6. &c. (l) Ps. 94. 12. Acts 9. 15, 16. Phil. 1. 29.

removed. There's nothing so beneficial as Affliction, if we do not frustrate their Efficacy, by the irregular managery of our selves under them. There's not a trouble we meet with, we can be without, but hath its place and work in that frame and design God hath ordained, to bring us to Glory. It had been far worse with us, if they had not befallen us: some positive sadder Grief hath seized on us; or, we should not been able of enjoying so much happiness, in this or the next World. The sufferings of God's Servants, are, but *for a very little while* (m); limited, to *ten days* (n), to *three days* (o), to *one day* (p), to *a night* (q), to *an hour* (r), to *a moment* (s), to *a small moment* (t).

Had I been *Rich*, I might have been Covetous, Prodigal, Luxurious: if *Honourable*, Proud, Tyrannical, Ambitious: if in *Health*, Soft, Effeminate, Dainty, Sensual. Had he not by some Affliction prevented me, or caused me to retreat, I had run too far in the prosecution of secular pleasures or profits; or, he lays it on me, to try the strength and vigour of my mind: to call forth, and exercise Patience, Fortitude, Trust, and Confidence in him; my Fidelity and Loyalty.

(m) Isa. 10. 25. (n) Rev. 2. 10. (o) Hos. 6. 2.
 (p) Za. 3. 9. (q) Psal. 30. 5. (r) Rev. 3. 10. (s) 2 Cor.
 4. 17. (t) Isa. 54. 7.

ty to him. To make me more circumspect, not only free from notorious faults, but more perfectly vertuous, and good: to commend, set off, and sweeten my future good things; to make the relish of them more sweet and pleasant. It's not fit, not safe for *Comforts*, to go without their *Attendant*, Affliction.

I will henceforth set no other price on things, then as they relate to my *true End*, and *Interest*. Let me be always under the care and skill, the wholsome Discipline of such a Tutor and Physitian, my mind shall keep even pace with thee: nor shall *thy will*, be ever different from *my free choice*. Answer the necessity of my *Health*, not the importunity of my *Appetite*. Take my *Soul's* part, against my *Enemies*; not *theirs*, against my *Soul*. Give me Poverty and Sicknes, rather, then not Grace to use Riches and Health: if I want them, thou requirest not, what thou givest not; if I have them, and want the use, thy Mercy proves my Judgment. Let Affliction be my Portion; so Contentment, Love to the Acquiescence in thy Will, fortitude of Mind, and universal Amendment, be the Use and Interest, eternal Felicity will then be the Issue, Event, and Purchase.

Encourage-

Encouragement from the Providence of GOD.

CONSIDER the *Providence of God*, the continual exercise of his Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, whereby he observes, supports, and governs all Creatures, Actions, and Events, with their particular Circumstances, in such a way as is most suitable to their Natures; *immediately*, to their proper ends; *remotely*, to the Order and Ornament of the Universe; *especially*, to the good of his Elect; *ultimately*, to his own Glory. He makes not the *World* by his Power, and then cares not, whether it stand or fall. He employ'd not infinite Wisdom to build an House, and then sent Chance and Folly to dwell in it: he that made it, inhabits and governs it: is as much concern'd to conserve, as create. That which was worthy making, is worthy preserving. He would not employ infinite Wisdom and Power to create that, which he would afterwards disregard. He cannot but see every thing, being every where present, at hand. 'Tis no diversion, no trouble to him, to govern and rule all he sees. There is need of him in all places, and over all things. He is no where without an Interest, or without Business. He is Owner
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every-where, in the possession of what he hath made, and ingages himself in his own Possession. He cannot desert his own handy-work. The common Father of all the World, must then be concern'd in the Lives, Actions, and Affairs of his Children. As God hath given good men power to do Miracles, to save the World; so, he hath done Miracles himself, to save them. In Divine, and Humane Records, are Instances not a few, how his Providence hath regarded them, interposed for them, marked them for safety (v) made a difference between them and others. God had so great a regard for a good man in an evil World, that he took him out of it unto himself by a rare and miraculous Translation (w). The Windows of Heaven could not drown the World, though very wicked, before *Noah* had made an Ark, though that was a hundred and twenty years in making (x). Nor the *Angel* destroy *Sodom*, until *Lot* was set out of the skirts of that Destruction (y). Hence the *Apostle* observes, *The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation* (z). They are his peculiar people; his particular charge. He makes more account of them, then of all the World. He

(v) Ex. 12. 7, 13. Ez. 9. 4. Rev. 7. 3. (w) Gen. 5.
 24. (x) Gen. 6. 8, &c. (y) Gen. 19. 20. (z) 2 Pet.
 2. 9.

keeps

keeps them above all ; nay, he keeps all for their sake : he preserv'd the *Ark*, for *Noah's sake* ; *Goshen*, for *Israel's sake* ; all that were in the *Ship*, for *St. Paul's sake*. He supports all Kingdoms and States, yea, Heaven and Earth for the Church's sake. For he keeps the Heavens, for the Earth ; the Earth, for living Creatures ; living Creatures, for Man ; *Man*, for *Israel* ; *Israel* for the *Elect sake*. And, as soon as Grace hath finished her work ; and the whole number of the *Elect* is accomplish'd ; Nature shall utterly cease, and this World give place to a better. According to the singular degrees of Love ; are his peculiar intentions of care and fore-cast, help, and assistance. *Providence is special*, where *Love is singular*. He holds such a watchful eye of Providence over every one of his People, as if he tended him only ; yet takes such a special care of all in general, as of every one in particular. With a *particular Providence* he watches, not only over every *particular Person*, but over every *several Concern* of that *Person*. Their wonderful safety, their great *Enemy* owns. He acknowledges a *three fold fence about them*, that hinders him, and all evil from reaching them, or theirs : *Hast not thou set an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he bath, on every side (a) ?*

(a) Job 1. 10.

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Dost thou not protect *him*, his *Family*, and *all that is his*, from all manner of Evil, by thy every-where present Providence, and Almighty Power? not leaving the least gap or breach for any annoyance to come in unto him? In all the Motions and Commotions of the World, he forgets not them; still, it shall be well with them: no evil shall come nigh them: nothing shall hurt them: all things shall work good unto them: all is for *their good*; and he thinks nothing *too good* for *them*. Nothing shall befall them without his knowledge of it, and his being concerned for it. He determines the bounds of their Habitations (*b*), upholds him, ordereth his steps, delighteth in his way (*c*), suffereth not his Soul to famish (*d*), preserves his going out, and coming in; watches over him; sets a watch over him; is on his right hand, and round about him (*e*). He is with him in the Fire, in the Water (*f*), in Trouble (*g*), in the Valley of the shadow of Death (*h*), covers them with his Feathers, and under his Wings (*i*), careth for them, is mindful, tender, careful of them, affectionate towards them, provides for them; defends them, values them as his Portion, the lot of his Inheritance, his Treasure, his Jew.

(*b*) Acts 17. 26. (*c*) Psal. 37. 17, 23. (*d*) Prov. 10. 3. (*e*) Psal. 121. 3, &c. and 125. 2. (*f*) Isa. 43. 1. (*g*) Psal. 46. 1. (*h*) Psal. 23. 4. (*i*) Psal. 91. 4.

els,

els, his Flock, his Servants, his Friends, his Children, his Spouse, his Beloved, the Apple of his Eye. He is not ashamed to be call'd their God, and Christ is not ashamed to call them Brethren. Here they are all *Kings in disguise*, and never without their *Life-guard* attending them where-ever they go. He gives his angels charge over them, to keep them in all their ways (k), until they have finish'd their course of Service and Suffering; and then to bring them to himself, to their Crowns, and to set them upon their Thrones. We find (l) many Angels at this Employment, carrying happy (seemingly forlorn) *Lazarus*, into *Abraham's Bosome*; as if they had been ambitious to bear him, every one striving which should carry a Limb.

Take therefore no thought for your lives (m). Use all lawful endeavours after, prudently manage present enjoyments, and leave the rest to him. Undertake all with a quiet mind; resigned to his disposal, without doubtful, fearful, anxious thoughts about future things; *Saying, what shall we eat? or, what shall we drink? or, wherewithal shall we clothed?* Which way shall I support my Family? How shall I fill these empty Bellies? How shall I cover so many naked Backs?

(k) Psal. 91. 11. (l) Luke 16. 22. (m) Mat. 6. 25, &c.

Will the finger of Providence toil or spin for me? Shall I be fed with a Raven's-bill? Will the Clouds drop down Mannah unto me? Alas, I find my charges increase, and my Estate diminish: large Payments, and slender Incomes; less then a *Miracle* cannot retrieve me; and the time of *Miracles* is now past: I, or mine, must perish through condemned Poverty. Why, be not *wanting* in *thy Duty*, and he will not be wanting in *his Providence*. Do not forfeit his Goodness, Bounty, and Protection; and he will not fail exercising them towards thee. Expect all your supplies from him: Who cloaths the Lillies of the Field? Who imps the Sparrows Wings? Who feeds the young Ravens? Who preserveth Man, and Beast? Whose tender Mercies are over all his Works? [*Is not the life more (excellent, more valuable) then meat? and the body then raiment?*] Will he, that granted us a Being, deny the preservation of it, so long as he hath appointed it? Suffer such a stately Structure to fall to decay, for want of repair, and support? Lose that which is of so great a value, for want of food and raiment, so little in comparison of life? 'Tis a greater thing to *make*, then *maintain us*; to bring us out of nothing, then to supply us, when we have nothing; to cloath us with flesh and skin, then with a garment;

to,

to make a mouth, then to find meat for it. 'Tis so much more easie to give food, then life ; and raiment, then the Body ; that he, who was so kind, so able to do the one, is not unable, will not be backward, cannot be so cruel, but to do the other. He made nothing casual, or to forsake it. His being a Creator obliges him to be careful of, to provide for his Creatures. They are all his *Pensioners*, have their meat at his *great Ordinary*. If he kept it not open, the whole World would instantly feel an universal Famine. He is no needy Householder, nor takes more into his Family, then he hath means to maintain : none in it are neglected by him : the little Ant, the creeping Worm, receive their Alms at his hand. He never gave life, but allowed conveniences for it. He that gives mouths, will give meat. He had never made us understand the way of living, but that he intended to bless, and succeed our endeavours. His first care in forming us, is an Argument of his future Providence over us.

Behold the Fowls of the Air] Consider seriously how they are fed ; of all Creatures, they seem to take least care for their food. Many of them spend their whole lives, as it were, in singing, without thought where to get their next meal : you might be as cheerful,

ful, and be fed. Were it not better to be *without Reason*, then to make use of it, only for our vexation? To be incapable of thinking of God, as Beast and Fowls are, then to think on him, only to distrust him, and murmur against him? We feed *Domestic Fowls* about the House, But who feeds those that fly in the Firmament? That, making no Provision in Summer, should in all likelihood starve in the Winter: yet are then fattest, and thrive more then those nurs'd by man's care. They have no *Repositories*, yet never want; nor *Granaries*, yet have store. They neither *Sow*, nor *Reap*; yet eat, and drink, and sleep quietly at night; know not where to feed next; yet go out, and find a Table furnish'd for them by their Creator, and your heavenly Father. Will he that hath made such plentiful provision for the necessary sustenance, convenience, and defence, relief, delight, and satisfaction of all Creatures, neglect his Off-spring? Shall he satisfy every living Thing, and not his own Children; who may look upon all Creatures as the Goods of their Father's House, feeding, and providing for them? [*Are not ye better*] much better [*then they?*] Every one of you, then all they? One Heir, then all other Attendance? One Jewel, then all the common Vessels of the House? If he eye, and

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and regard every Sparrow ; Birds of so little account, that one cannot be valued ; there's no Money so small, but is a price too great for it, *Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings* (n) ? Be confident, he hath a singular Care, a far more intimate Affection for you, who cost him so dear, One Sparrow is not worth half a farthing ; and there's no man shall suffer half a farthings-worth of harm, more then he orders. *Not one of them is forgotten before God*, much more, not any part of you, *but even the very hairs of your head are* (inter numerata) *all numbred* ; much more the days of your lives ; and the sufferings of those days. If he look to all my *hairs*, much more to my provision, and safety, the Members of my Body, the great moments of my Life and Death. If we have security, for that, of which we keep no account, cut off, and cast away (*pili non facio, ne pilo quidem melius :*) If every one, be not only known to him, but so kept, as it were by Tale, that his Enemies cannot pull off *one*, without his permission ; but, for it he calls them to a Reckoning : How much more have we security of our essential parts, and that, without which, we cannot live ?

Which of you by taking thought, can add one cubit to his stature ?] stint, or statute mea-

(n) Luke 12. 6.

sure

sure of Estate? Without him, all our thoughtfulness is as vain, as if a Dwarf should there by think to acquire a tall man's stature. The most griping Worldling puts not up one penny, without a Ticket sign'd by his hand, to fetch it out of his publick *Exchequer*, whose is the earth, and the fulness thereof. If he *shut up that*, all Creatures break, and become Bankrupts. Turnmoiling Musings, are additions to our Fears; never further, often hinder our desires. He may justly curse our present, who distrust him for future Mercies, and will not be satisfi'd with the Fidelity of his Providence. All the Joys in this World, cannot take one gray hair out of our heads; but there needs only disturbance of mind, to make us hoary before our time. *Bion* seeing a Prince weeping, and tearing his hair for sorrow, asked him, *If Baldness would Cure his Grief.* A little that a righteous man hath, is better then the riches of many wicked (o), because that little, is God's Allowance.

And why take you thought for rayment? consider the Lillies of the field how they grow.] Without the Gardiner's Care and Industry, they neither do the work of the man, in toiling without, nor of the woman, in spinning within doors; contribute nothing to their beautiful Cloathing: [*And yet, I say unto you,*

(o) Psal. 37. 16.

that

that even Solomon] (the Wisest, Richest of Princes) [*in all his glory*] and Magnificence, [*was not arrayed like one of them.*] The natural Bravery of the Lilly, coming from its own fruitful Bowels, is (as a beautiful, to a painted face) beyond all the Glory of Apparel, that Art and Cost could bring unto him. All the Lillies of the Field, are so deck'd and cloath'd, as is not on one Solomon, *in all his Glory.* He puts more Glory every day, on one Flower, then Skill and Wealth can on the greatest Monarch, in his greatest Splendor. His providential goodness extended to the Flowers of the Field, is beyond all that man can do, by the utmost extent of his Wisdom, Power, and Riches.

Wherefore, if God so] curiously Cloath, not only [the] delightful Flowers of the Garden, but [*grass of the field,*] we tread on, of so little account, so short continuance, [*which to day is, and to morrow cast into the Oven, shall be not much more cloath you?*] Of a more excellent Rank, and Order, Frame, and Structure, Appointment, and End? your *Lives*, more valuable? your *Bodies*, more wonderful? your *Souls*, more durable? your *Work*, more excellent? your *final Estate*, more considerable then theirs? Will he, that so plentifully feeds the *Sparrows*, that have no *Granaries*; so gorgeously cloath the *Lillies*, that have

have no *Distaff*; make so rich, so glorious provision, for such short-liv'd Creatures, starve those, that rationally serve, that shall eternally enjoy him? His Providence regards the lowest part of the Creation; *Fowls*, and *Lillies*, as well as the Conduct of *States*, and *Empires*. He remember'd not only *Noah*, but every living thing, and all the Cattel that was with him in the *Ark* (p). He giveth to the *Beast* (q). He provideth for the *Raven* his food, when his young ones cry unto God (r). The young *Lions* seek (and find) their meat from God. The several Kingdoms of the World, are thy little Families (most bountiful Creator) and thou comprehendest in thy fatherly care, all things which thou hast made. The eyes of all wait upon thee, that thou mightest give them their meat in due season. What thou givest them, they gather, thou openest thy hand, and satisfiest the desires of every living thing (s). Now, for us, who have such express promises added to such instances of his Providence; who takes more care for us, than for other Creatures (t); to doubt of sufficiency (if not Riches,) argues infidelity and diffidence in him to admiration, O ye of little faith!

(p) Gen. 8. 1. (q) Psal. 147. 9. (r) Job 38. 41.
 (s) Psal. 104. 21. 27, 28. and 145. 15. (t) 1 Cor.
 9. 9.

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The fear of Want, is for want of obeying his Command, [*Take therefore no thought for the morrow.*] Be not anxiously solicitous for future necessities, [*Saying, what shall we eat? or, what shall we drink? &c.*] 'Tis your shame to imitate those you abhor as Infidels; and not to differ in Practice, as you do in Profession from them. [*For after all these things do the Gentiles seek.*] As if themselves, not God, were to provide for them. This studious, earnest, busie Inquiry, is more becoming Heathens, who have no lively apprehension of God, his Providence, Fatherly Care, and Love; then you, who acknowledge and experience them. 'Tis for poor Orphans to cark, and care, to shift as well as they can, for themselves: But with you, the case is quite otherwise, [*For your heavenly Father knows you have need of all these (necessary) things.*] What he first gave, and is still needful for you: that *Life* and the *Body*, cannot subsist without *Food* and *Raiment*. 'Tis enough for a *Father* that he *knows* his *Childrens* wants, and his reproach, to neglect them. He will be sure to supply those wants, which are of his own making; you may as well question, whether he *knows*, as whether he will *supply*. He made us so *needy*, not because he was niggardly, but bountiful: not because he was not good, but would be always

always so to us: not that we should be poor, and want these things, but humble, and always go to him, and have them: not to make us miserable, but that we should still remember him, crave, and expect supplies from him, depend upon him, and not be able to live without him. We cannot put upon him a greater wrong, then the *Alienation* of our *Trust*, which he challenges as his peculiar: if plac'd on any *Creature*, we Deifie it; we take upon us what is proper to him; and 'tis no less a fault and folly, to invade God's part, then to neglect our own. O let my care be, to depend on thee, as thine is to provide for me, and I cannot want.

But seek ye first (before, and above all) the Kingdom of God, as the end, and his Righteousness as the way, and all necessities in it, to it, shall be added unto you.] Let your principal Care be to approve your selves my obedient, dependent Children, and you are secur'd of *Maintenance*, in your *Minority*, as well as of your *Inheritance*, when you come to *Age*. There is *Bread*, as well as *Grace*; and *Cloathing* as well as *Righteousness* in the promise; *Godliness* hath the promise of the *Life that now is*, as well as of that which is to come (v): as certain, concerning *Food* and

R (v) 1 Tim. 4. 8.

Raiment, as Remission of sins, and Eternal Life. Trust in the Lord, and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the Land, and verily, thou shalt be fed (w). If he give grace and glory, he will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly (x). Be our heart honest, our hand diligent, our desires moderate, our souls believing, and we shall not fail of a supply of the needs of our Bodies, which is the just measure of our wants. Take upon you the care of duty, and leave all others to him. Such as discard themselves from his Family, have little reason to expect the Provisions of it. But he will surely mind our good, if we faithfully discharge our duty. We shall find him answering us, in what we look for from him, in doing what he expects from us. Can we have so mean thoughts of him, as to think, we should intend his glory, and not he much more intend our good? That he should neglect us, doing the things that are pleasing in his sight? It is Distrust in him, to be troubled for what is future; Impatience against him, to be troubled for what is past, or present. This temper of Spirit disbelieves his Wisdom, Goodness, Power, and Faithfulness; which are all engaged for our provision, and security in his way.

Take therefore no thought for the morrow, for
(w) Psal. 37. 3. (x) Psal. 84. 11.

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the morrow shall take thought for the things of it self.] Rest satisfi'd with your present allowance; without being solicitous for the future; or fearful of Evils, when you feel none. Impossibles, concern not our desires; nor Unavoidables, our fears; nor things past remedy, our vexing sorrow. Desire not what thou canst not attain; nor fear, what thou canst not prevent. Use the remembrance of past things, as instructive experiments, not renewers of thy Torment. Nothing we can suffer from without, is worth one minutes disquiet, of so noble a thing as the Soul, which then comes nearest its Original, the nearer it comes to Immutability. Reliance on God saves us from much sin, and misery: whilst distrustful thoughts devour our Peace, and leave us nothing in the room, but fear, grief, and discontent. All solicitous looking beyond the present, takes off so much from our present Content. Imaginary Evils operate as if real, and produce substantial griefs. Ignorance of future miseries is a priviledge, when knowledge is ineffectual to prevent them. That Providence that brings in the day, shall also bring new Events to comfort us under all the Evils of it. Let not the *present* have the charge and burden of the *future* also. Make your troubles as few, as small, as short as may be: every
days

days incumbrance, is, pain enough for all our Patience, Care enough for all our Prudence, Labour enough for all our Diligence; [*Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof.*] Why then by Impatience, and distrustful forethoughts, fruitless griefs for past, present, and projecting future Evils, do we anticipate, encrease and lengthen them? Living in misery now, for fear we should, hereafter? Spending the night allowed for rest, with irksome apprehensions of the next days task, worse then the task and burthen it self? Why are we so cruel to our selves, so ungrateful to God, that, every suggestion of a possible danger or miscarriage, shall rob him, and our selves too? Shall create more trouble, then all our present comforts, peace and thankfulness? A Cloud no bigger then a man's hand, darken the whole face of Heaven it self? hinder the light of Reason, the prospect of Faith, the sight of God and all his Mercies? While we live at such a rate, where is our *Reason*? Quietly to enjoy the present good, while we disquiet our selves about those Evils, that are not, or may never be, or turn to our great advantage? Where is that *Faith* that should support us under the very greatest pressures, while we distrust God, in our present ease, and plenty? Where is our *Joy*, and *Thankfulness* to him, for all

his favours through our whole Lives, while our impatient hopes, the groundless fears and jealousies of our own fancies, extinguish the sense of his goodness; and make us as unworthy to him, as burthensome to our selves? We can no way so honour God, so ease our selves, as to commit all unto him; mind our duty, without imploying our thoughts about Events. How easie then, how comfortable would our Lives be? So lives the Child in his Father's House; so sleeps the Infant in its Mother's Arms; so live the Saints and Angels of God; this is the Life that is liv'd in Heaven; without Care, or Fear, Distrust, Perplexity, or Anxiety, under this assurance, That God will be the same to all Eternity, which he is at present to them.

*Encouragement by Considering GOD,
as Our Father.*

A Young man being at Sea in a dreadful Storm, when all the Passengers were at their Wits-end, he only was Chearful: being ask'd the Reason of his Mirth, answered, that [*The Pilot of the Ship was his Father, and he knew his Father would have a care of him.*] Though the Ship of the Church and State be in a sinking condition, look we to our

our *Station*, our *Pilot* (God and our Father) will have a care of us, and it. While we consider in whose hands, the Government of the World is, though Heaven and Earth come together, a gracious Heart and solid Quiet, will not, cannot be far asunder. He hath a greater venture of glory in the Church's welfare, then men can have; and is fighting for, while he seems to fight against his people: answering their Prayers, whilst he seems to reject them. However it goes with the World, with the Wicked, *it shall be well with the righteous* (y). He puts a difference (in publick Calamities) between they that serve him, and they that serve him not. *They shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day, when I make up my Jewels, and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own Son that serveth him* (z). In a raging Fire, or devouring over-flowing Calamity. [Propriety] alone is a ground of [Care]; a man would willingly save, and secure that which is his [own], and of any use unto him: But, if you add unto this [preciousness], that encreases the Care: but of all Jewels, those which come out of our Bowels, are more precious, then those which adorn us: [Relation] works not only upon the Affection, but Bowels (a). And as [Jewels] add an

(y) Isa. 3. 10. (z) Mal. 3. 17. (a) Jer. 31. 20.

excellency, to the word [mine], so doth [Service] to the word [Son]. A man hath much conflict on himself, to take off his heart from an *undutiful Son* (b). But, if any Child be *more* a *Jewel* than another, certainly 'tis a [dutiful] Child; he hath a special Interest in his Father's Eye, and Ear, Hand, Heart, and Inheritance; not only by Nature, but Obedience. *Propriety*, they are *mine*: *Preciousness*, they are *Jewels*, (Treasures, Ornaments unto me:) *Relation*, they are *Sons*: *Usefulness*, they are *Sons* that *serve me*: All sufficient grounds of Care, and Protection in the midst of Danger. So that, wheresoever we are, we have nothing to do, but to believe, obey, and rejoice we are *in the hands of a Father*; (in better hands we cannot be); *his charge*, to whole Care we have left our selves, and the ordering of all our Concerns: who stands intrusted with us: who is always faithful to those he takes into his Care: who hath stigmatiz'd careless provident Parents with the name of, *worse then Infidels* (c). And implanted in every Creature, not only principles of *self-preservation*, but *natural affections*, (even in those of a natural devouring fierceness) *towards their Offspring*; so that, no Man, Wolf, Lyon ever hated his own flesh; but loved it, and che-

(b) 2 Sam. 18. 5, 29, 33. (c) 1 Tim. 5. 8.

rished

rished it. And will God suffer himself to be out-done, by the Kindness, Bounty, and Compassion of his own Creatures? *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee (d).* The provident care of my heavenly Father, forbids the care of Diffidence in him, and requires the care of Diligence in my self: to interest my Judgment in the choice and use of means, but to keep my Affections disinterested, unconcern'd in the Event: to serve, but not misdoubt *his Providence*, while I employ *my own*. That which is not within my power, should be out of my care. An obedient Child concerns not himself how he should have another Sure of Cloaths, or to-morrow-meals-meat: he eats that Meat; wears those Cloaths; is satisfi'd, with that Lodging and Provision, his Father provides him. But, how can I call him *Father*, and prefer my low, and sordid Cares, before his Providence; as if he were *such a Father*, as took no care for his Children. Solicitousness about the issue of my lawful Endeavours, derogates from him, as if he would not, could not, knew not how to help me. My Soul, disclaim God for thy Father, or rest contented with, and confident of his Fa-

(d) Isa. 49. 15.

therly Care, and Kindness, Provision and Protection. To whom shall I run in my Extremity? Of whom shall I crave Pardon, and Provision, Succour, and Relief? but of *my Father*, that Ocean of Goodness, which hath over-flow'd the whole Creation; that tires and lins the Flowers of the Field; neglects not any thing; provides for every thing he hath made; spreads a Table in the Wilderness, for the Beasts and Birds of prey; keeps open House for all his Creatures. But his faithful, Household Servants, are more especially under his Eye, his Care, his Providence; shall have given them meat in due season. Nor matters it *which way*; whether *Flesh* be brought in a Raven's Bill; or an *Angel* Bake our Bread with *Juniper Coals*; or our *own Industry*; or an unexpected *Friend*, or a *Customer*, from far, help us with it. Whatsoever *Hand* presents our Mercies, or whatsoever *Heart* was inclin'd to hand it, all flows from the *grand Original*. Every Mercy is the product of *Divine Love*, though second causes intervene; for those very causes have their creation, motion, direction and success from him. He that turns the *Hearts* of *Kings*, as the Rivers of Waters, turns also all the *little Rivulets* in the World into what scorched parched ground he pleases. Sacred Story derives from Heaven the

the kindness of *Abimelech* to *Abraham*, of *Laban* and *Esau* to *Jacob*, of *Ruth* to *Naboni*, of *Boas* to *Ruth*, of *Jonathan* to *David*, &c. When others shew kindness to us, let's consider the motions of Hearts are sometimes infused, but always conducted by him. It may be of good use, what *Hobson* the late noted Carrier of *Cambridge* said to a young Student, receiving a Letter of the sad Tidings of his Uncle's Death (who maintain'd him at the University) weeping bitterly, and reciting the cause of his grief, he reply'd, *Who gave you that Friend?* Which saying, was no small refreshment, support, and comfort to him then, and afterwards in his *Ministry*. So Mr. *Carter* greatly comforted one, (who making his moan to him, that he had lost the greatest Friend he had in the World, having in a manner all his Livelyhood by him) by saying, *When the Fountain is dryed up in one place, God will open it in another.* Mr. *Dod* intending to marry, was full of fear, and care how he should be able to live; his Income being so small, as only maintain'd him in his single state: looking out at a Window, and seeing a Hen scraping for her numerous Brood about her, thought thus with himself, *This Hen but liv'd before she had these Chickens, and she doth so now, with all these: I see the Fowls neither Sow, nor Reap, nor gather into Barnes, yet my*

Father feedeth them. He that feeds the Ravens, will not starve the Hens, said M^r Heiron on his Death-bed, to his distressed Wife, for her many Children. And Luther, leaving the World, Lord, (saith he) here are thy Children, thou lent'st them me, and I resign them back again to thee: while I look'd upon them as mine, I endeavour'd to provide for them; thy Bowels are infinitely above, what mine are. It's vile Ingratitude to despise a Present of God's preparing, and sending, so curious a Piece of his Workmanship: to rejoyce when our Cattel multiplies, and to murmur when our Children increases. It's heathenish distrustfulness, to fear, that he that hath provided Children for us, will not provide Necessaries for them. God often provides better for the poor Child, then for the repining Parent: the sinfully solicitous *Israelites*, who in the Wilderness concluded, they and their Children should be starv'd for want of Food, were themselves destroy'd for want of Faith; their Children mean while being reserv'd for a Land flowing with Milk and Honey.

If in my Father's House be Bread enough, and to spare, for hired Servants, much more for his Sons, who did not forget to be a Father, when we had forgotten to be Children; but gave his own Son to dye, that his adopted Sons (who were Children of the Devil) should

should live. And, how is it possible he should not compleat that Gift, by bestowing all other things that are profitable for us; and either present pressures, or deliverances from them, as he sees them most for our real advantage: *He that spared not his own, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things (e)?* We have have no caule to fear that God will not give us whatsoever is profitable for us, seeing he hath not spared his own Son to save us. We may well be confident in his Fatherly Love and Compassion towards us; as his Children, who in Christ is become our Father, and gives us both the *priviledge (f)* and *spirit of Sons (g)*, whose love towards us, is so much greater then that of earthly Parents towards their Children, as his goodness and mercy is greater; *If you then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your father which is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him (h).* *Tam pater, tam pater nemo!* Our very mould and frailty, he makes a sufficient argument to compassionate and relieve us; *like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him: for he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust (i).* He is our Father

(e) Rom. 8. 32. (f) Joh. 1. 12. (g) Gal. 4. 6.
(h) Mar. 7. 11. (i) Psal. 103. 13, 14.

when he strikes, corrects, seems to frown upon us, to carry it as our Enemy. He is too wise to manifest his love by outward tokens of distinction: or, to give that Son he loves best, a gayer Coat than the rest of his Children. *He will do nothing but what he should*, said a wise Son, when told, his Father would disinherite him. My Father is greater, wiser, better than I; he is supream over me; hath the whole disposal of me; is tender and careful of me; full of love, pity, and compassion towards me: knows better than I, what's best for me; and will make convenient provision for me. He's often more merciful to me in denying me what I ask, then he could be in granting. What *Father* can see *his Child* want Food when he hath it by him, unless he give him *Physick*, and then he must be kept to a *spare Diet*. I will trust his *Wisdom*, because he is *God*; and his *Love*, because he is my *Father*: So, I cannot doubt, but that any thing which he sends deserves my thanks, though I see not wherein the benefit of it lies. A Cup of Wormwood would not be reached to me by so wise, so good a Father, but that *his Love*, and my *Benefit* is mingled with it; coming from the Fountain of Love and Goodness, it hath a Blessing in it, though I cannot at present taste, or apprehend it. Though our Saviour knew
his

his cruel Murderer's design was to execute, not his Father's Will, but their own Malice; he falls not foul upon them; he over-looks the Cup-bearer, to look upon him that sent it, *The cup which my father hath given me, shall I not drink it (k)?* What Cup can be bitter, which his *Wisdom* provides, his *Goodness* sends, and consecrates to us? that hath the same Bowels of Mercy, Love, and Goodness to us in his Corrections, as in his Favours: he tempers our grief to our strength, not to our desert. Measures out the kind weight, and continuance of our Afflictions. They are appointed, sent under the conduct, and never exceed the line and limits of his Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, who is the mighty Sovereign, and Governour of the World: the great Creator, constant Observer, wise Disposer, uncontrollable Over-ruler of all things. Who hath absolute power to do whatsoever he pleases; is infinitely just, and will do what is righteous; infinitely wise, and knows what is best to be done; infinitely good in himself, and gracious to all that depend upon, and submit to him; that nothing shall befall them, but what shall turn to their present and everlasting good; making them best at least; turning Poison into a remedy; cross and contrary Events, co-operating for our real advantage. Resignation of our Con-

cerns to him, lays all querelous thoughts ; hushes all the whimperings of our minds in the hour of trouble. We never carve well for our selves, when we snuff at the portion cut out to us, by the hand of our heavenly Father. He that gave us so great a Blessing, as *Son-ship* when we were *Enemies*, will much more give us so (comparatively) small a Blessing as *Food*, now we are his *Sons*. Shall not he that saved our Souls from Death, deliver our Bodies from the dangers of this World ? His dealings with us, are all love, mercy, and faithfulness. He gives all his Children, so much as he sees sufficient for them. In an especial manner, his Grace to fear him, contented Spirits to submit to him, believing Hearts to depend upon him, his Blessing with all their enjoyments. He will preserve us *from Evil*, or *the Evil of it* ; proportion, bless it to us ; comfort, support us under it, and deliver us out of it. By him I am infallibly assur'd to be preserv'd, or reliev'd ; freed or rescued from, or secured under Affliction. I shall receive deliverance from them, or enjoy under them satisfaction and tranquillity of mind ; patience, and contentedness with his good pleasure ; submission, and resignation of my will to his ; support and comfort under my weaknesses and despondences ; such evidences, communications, and irradiations

diations of his love, and favour, care, and kindness to me, as shall, not only recompence the want and loss of any outward comfort, but sweeten the presence of any outward trouble; make them inconsiderable unto me, in comparison of them, not to be parted with for the enjoyment of them.

When *Julius Caesar* was at any time sad, upon the thoughts of any disaster that befel him, he was wont to say, *Cogitate esse Cæsarem*, *Think that thou art Cæsar*, and that put him into a more chearful temper. We could not be dismay'd, did we not forget our selves. *Why art thou, being the King's Son, lean from day to day? wilt thou not tell me (1)?* Nothing can add to, or detract from an infinite good and happiness. Is not *be better to us* than Houses, or Lands, Friends, Riches, or Honours? He hath all things, that hath him who hath all things. When Christ is given (a right to) All is given. No matter for many things, so I have the one thing needful: to whom thou givest Honour, so I have a portion of thy Grace: in what place I am, so I discharge the duty of it. *Who can complain of neglect*, whom the King himself imbraces, and delights to Honour? of Sicknes, whose Sins are forgiven? of Want, who hath an Interest in the Promises? of Poverty, who hath an Inheritance in Heaven? of Dishonour,

who is the Son of God, who wants neither Wisdom to direct, nor Interest to oblige him to do what is best for him? General Invitations, and common Mercies, are for us as men; but where thou givest Grace, thou comest close unto our Souls; and winnest us with dear and particular Intimations. If we are *thy Children*, we are richer then the World can make us, which the worst may have, and best want. Thou sufferest Infidelity to reign, to instruct thy Disciples: and abandonest the fairest part of the World, to them that persecute thee. There can be *no Poverty*, where we have *thee* for an *Inheritance*: he whom thou sufficest not, deserves to be perpetually poor. Give me but to serve, and relie upon thee, and I ask no more. Shall I say that's too little, which infinite Love and Wisdom thinks enough? Or, disorderly hasten towards enlargement, instead of patiently waiting the Lord's leasure? Should he spread before me all this World's Treasure, and bid me take what I would, could I do more wisely, then put the choice to him again? and beseech *him* to *abuse* for *me*, who loves me better, and knows better what's best for me, then my self? And shall I not now then, thankfully stand to his choice? We will henceforth be chearful, and contented in our present allotment. If every

every thing be *best*, which *he appoints*, why am I troubled, as if things went not well with me? It's impossible it should have been better with me then it is; it had not been well, if it had been otherwise. All things are ordered by his deliberate Counsel, and fore-knowledge, who grasps all my concerns, consults my universal good, is as exactly careful of me, as if he had none other to look after: and suffers no trouble to befall me, because he doth not regard; for his Care and Providence extends to every Creature; or, because he cannot or will not help, for he is equally infinite in all his Attributes; but because his Wisdom finds that Condition fittest for me. Had I more of the World, I might have less Grace. Though my Commons be short, it should certainly be otherwise, if he saw it better. If I have not what I desire, I have what I ought to desire.

Querelous wranglings, sullen discontents, disturb not my satisfaction and repose. I will *desire*, and *will*, just so, and no otherwise, then thou doest; O, Omniscient, Omnipresent, only wise God, and merciful Father, whose Goodness designs my Welfare, and whose Wisdom manages that design. I would rather have that be, which already is, then any thing else. That's better which thou willest, then I. Thou consultest well
and

and wisely about it : know'st what use to make of thy Creatures ; where most fit to bestow them ; and wilt dispose me there, where most necessary, and best for me ; and suffer no evil to befall me, unless for some greater good. I venture all with thee : I freely refer all to thee, in the particular disposition of my self, and mine. Grant me, not what I crave, but what thou knowest good to give me. Take from my punishment, or add to my patience. Lessen my Burden, or strengthen my Shoulders. All *Bestness* depends upon the *wisest Goodness*. I will refuse nothing, which seems *good unto thee* : and more willingly consent to that thou wouldest have, then to my own inclination. Put me into what condition, use me as, lead me whether thou pleasest. Chuse my Raiment and Provision for me : Sicknes, or Health ; Respect, or Disgrace ; Plenty, or Poverty : I will, not only consent and submit unto, but make it my business to vindicate, apologize, and maintain, these thy dealings with me, to be, most fit and prudent, most surable, and advantageous to me.

Regu

Regulating our Desires and Opinions.

SO uneasie and unquiet a thing is Man, not rais'd above this unconstant state; that he suffers as many Servitudes, as the World hath Changes. Every alteration abroad, makes another at home: a Tide of swelling or sinking Affections within, at every ebb or flow of things without. His mind is in such perpetual agitation, till escaped out of the Whirl and Circuit of the Allurements and Affrightments of this World, that he finds no peaceable Corner in it. Whilst, he that lives above it, looks down upon it in all its Glory with Triumph and Contempt, and with the Foot of Scorn, spurns it into Inconsiderableness; stands upright in the midst of Ruins: endures Torments, with greater Courage, then Persecutors threaten, or execute them: *Looses* all earthly Enjoyments with more cheerfulness, then others enjoy them: neither desires, nor fears Changes: is the same, whatsoever happens in his Fortunes, or Affairs: his Mind and Estate are Matches: hath learn'd to bear all Injuries, Disappointments, and Difficulties, with an equal mind. *Qui desiderium suum clausit, cum Fove de felicitate contendit.* He is wise enough

enough, who knows himself ; great enough, who masters himself ; rich enough, who enjoys himself ; hath Pleasure enough, who pleases himself ; happy enough, who lives well. 'Tis almost impossible he should be oppressed with Sorrow, who serves God, for God's sake. Christianity teaching us to be Content in all Estates, teaches us to be happy ; for, nothing from without can make us miserable, unless we join to it our own consent, and apprehend it such ; and entertain it in our sad and melancholy Retirements ; and comply not with all the Issues of Divine Providence. *Impatience* makes every Ague a Fever ; and every Fever, a Calenture ; and that Calenture, may expire in Madness. But, a *quiet Spirit*, is a great disposition to Health ; and for the present, alleviates, if not removes the Sickness. He that hath learn'd to determine his desires, when his needs are served, and, to judge of his needs, by the proportion of Nature, hath nothing wanting towards Riches : he only wants that is not satisfi'd. *Joseph* and *Mary*, we may easily suppose, as poor, as Hunger ; as forsaken, as Banishment ; as disconsolate, as Strangers ; yet, their present Lot gave them no Affliction, because fed with a necessary Hospitality ; and their Desires were no larger then their Tables ; their eyes look'd only upwards, and

and they were careless for the future, and careful of their duty; and so made their Lives pleasant, by the Measures and Discourses of Divine Philosophy.

Things below, have nothing of certainty, but the Miseries that attend them. The toil and labour, we undergo to attain them: the fear of losing them, after such troublesome Acquisition; the care we employ to secure them; the grief we resent, when they are taken from us; are not so much the Evidences of our Wants, as of their own Malignity. And, 'tis not easie to resolve, whether *Poverty*, with its Incommodities, be more supportable, then *Abundance*, with all its insuperable Torments. A Christian is a King in this World, without the load of a Scepter or Diadem. To him Poverty is not insupportable; but to them that think it so. The Imagination makes the greatest part of the Torment. Men must be ignorant of necessitous Contentments, to be afraid of their condition. If we frequent their Habitations, we should see there's nothing dreadful in them, but the name they bear: that Joy covers the Faces of most of their Guests: that they dispute tranquillity of mind with the rich; and that without being laden with the cares that disturb the Wealthy; they taste Life's sweetness with delight; and if they be forc'd to tran-

transplant, they leave their Cottages without Complaint: The very place others call Banishment, is the Country of the Inhabitants: they seek to get out, and not to carry away; and assure themselves to find every where sufficient to satisfy their needs. While the *Rich* are unhappy in the midst of Plenty and Pleasures. Calamities beset them on all sides: their Treasures are their Troubles; they get them with Labour; possess them with Fear; and lose them with Sorrow. *Seneca* esteem'd himself happy in his Exile; the Penury that attended him, contributed to his quiet; he thought he had lost his *Trouble*, not his *Goods*, when they spoiled him of his Wealth: and that, by a happy mischief he had recovered his Liberty, in being deprived of the care of the preserving his Riches.

He hath most, not that strives to add to his Estate, or Reputation, but to subtract from his desires. 'Tis more eligible to be without them, than to need them. He is the greatest *Monarch* that hath little and is satisfy'd; not that thinks he hath not what he should, what others have, what he might have, or, that grieves there is no more to have. He that's always Craving, is never Contented. If we would spare to *desire*, we might spare to *have*. There are few men so

miserable, that may not find satisfaction in themselves, and their condition, because, it is in every man's power to-terminate his desires; whilst, by their disorders we are induc'd to value more, a future trouble or evil, then a present repose or good. He is not happy, who hath all he desires, but, who desires not, what he hath not. Were there no other World, I would not be greedy after the great things of this, when 'tis far more easie to want them. Here would I indulge my self the sensuality of a contented mind; the luxury of an *Ataraxie*, of an indifference as to all these things; of being quiet and untroubled by not having them; free from the hurry and disorder of them. He that hath once a competency, hath all the Contentment that's to be found in temporal things: and experience will tell him, after a sufficiency once attain'd, Contentment will encrease no more, though Riches encrease never so much. He can have no Enemy, who will be a Friend to all. Nothing is able to cross him, who is dispos'd to take every thing well.

Nothing is enough to satisfy Lust, a little to satisfy Nature, all the rest is but matter of Opinion. We pick our own Sorrows, out of others Joys: *Comparison*, more then *Reality*, makes us happy or miserable. Many never found

found themselves in want, till discovered the abundance of others : and could have lik'd their own Portion well enough, had they not seen another have something they liked better. They hunger, not because they are empty, but because others are full. Nay, the most inconsiderable thing acquires a value, by being anothers, whilst we despise much greater, being our own. Not *Necessity*, but *Ambition* and *Superfluity*, sets mens hearts upon the rack. Had I all the World, I could enjoy no more, then to cloath and feed me; the rest could please me no otherwise, then by looking on; and I can thus solace my self while it is anothers: with the same mind, behold their Riches, and my own Poverty; and make as great a benefit of that, as they of their encrease: whilst I am free from those black phantasms of Cares and Fears which leap on Down-Pillows, and pass through splendid Pallaces, to find out those Pompous Lives, which have usually but the Bark of Happiness. They that *seem* to live so *Happy*, do not seem so to themselves; but, by times and turns, have their Grievs and Discontents. Besides, those which are most happy, are most sensible; and, unless all things fall out to their liking, impatient of all Adversity. Every little cross overthrows them: So small are the occasions which take from the most

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Fortunate, the height of their Happiness. We find not Miseres so uneasie as we make them : while we not only endure the whole Affliction that troubles, but encrease it by repining at the envied Condition of others ; fancying we are more unhappy then we should be, were we allow'd to exchange that which troubles us, for any thing which doth not. Many of those we envie, as thinking them far less sufferers then our selves, look with envious Eyes on us, and do but dissemble their Grievances more handsomly then we, not find them more easie then ours. Every one is as miserable, or as happy as he esteems himself. If we have not what we would, 'tis but (at worst) being contented in what we have : a sure means of discharging that Anxiety of mind, in respect of our Condition, or other mens. If I possess not so great an Estate as many do, some of them perhaps (notwithstanding their abundance) enjoy less then I ; as well as, there are more, who have not so much as either. We would willingly exchange Fortunes with many, but perhaps not be any of those men on any account. There's something in every Estate, which without Experience is not known, and being experienc'd doth molest and trouble. We judge of our own Discontents, but know not how far they are exceeded in the same kind

kind, in others. Were every mans troubles publickly known, few but would bear their own Burdens, rather then other mens. Would we look with as much Compassion on the Adversities of our Brethren, as we do with Envy on their Prosperities, we should find cause to sit down contentedly with our own Burden, and Comforts, that we bear but the proportionable share of our common Nature; except some extraordinary demerit of our own, hath added to the weight; and, in that Case, we have more reason to admire our sufferings, are so few, then so many. There's nothing more *Disingenious*, more *Diabolical*, then, to think our selves more miserable, because another is happy: To create wants, from the envious Contemplation of other mens Abundance: That cannot first be satisfi'd with an Inferiour degree of Happiness; and then, whet our *Impatience*, with other mens *Enjoyments*, of what we cannot obtain. Whereas, we should make the Comforts of others, an allay, not an improvement of our own miseries. *True Charity* attracts the Concerns of our Brethren to our selves: and, he that hath that in his Breast, can never want Refreshment, whilst any about him are Happy; for, by adopting their Interests, he shares in their Joys. As our present Content, is in the power of our Resolutions; so, we

we have as much Command of the future : And, its but supposing the worst that we apprehend, or can happen to us, already come to pass. He easily bears adverse Fortunes, who always expects them. Foresee the worst Accident, and all things will fall out prosperously. He that thus prepares himself, needs not fear his Tranquility of mind, since he resolves to give it himself.

That which troubles, or gives us rest, is *in our selves*. If we be not quiet *there*, every thing without, will make us miserable; if we be, nothing can. If we be sick, and are afraid to die; in pain, and have no patience; scorn'd, and are proud; impoverished, and are covetous; nothing can help us from being unhappy. But, if we fear not Death, so much as an ill Life; think Impatience, and Murmuring, a worse Disease then the Gout or Stone; *Pride* the highest disgrace; *Covetousness* the basest Beggery, the greatest Poverty: If we die not unwillingly, when we must die sooner then we would; lose not our Patience with our Health; nor our Constancy and Chearfulness, with our Estate; be not our own Enemy, when we have no Friend; vex not our selves, when others trouble us; be not solicitous for to morrow too; if we be ill to day, we can feel no harm by Death, or Sickness, or Scorn, or Want.

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Keep

An Infallible Way

Keep all well *within*, that no disorder put *that* out of order, and we are well. No man can make another a Slave, that hath not first enslav'd himself. Be not inthral'd to Honour, or Disgrace, Pleasure, or Pain, Hope, or Fear, Life, or Death, and thou art free. Nothing can overcome him, that is not first overcome by his own Imaginations, and Passions, false Opinions, unreasonable Desires, fond Affections, ungrounded Expectations. A proud man hath no God; an unpeaceable man hath no Neighbour; a distrustful man hath no Friend; but, a *discontented man* hath not himself. Those Burdens that break a froward man's Back, will not so much as break a silent man's Sleep.

*At what so're shall happen, be not sad;
A like for all, that God dispenseth glad:
Wise Periander did through grief expire;
Because Events not join'd with his desires.*

The best way to be Rich, is not to encrease Possessions, but to lessen Desires. So, the Contented man must needs be abundantly provided for: being so intirely satisfi'd with what he hath, as to have no desires at all. Whosoever would have this rare Jewel of *Contentment* (which turns want into Wealth,

Wealth, all into Gold) must come (as they who seek the *Philosopher's Stone*) with Minds divested of all Ambitious, Covetous Desires, else they shall never find it. None are less Contented then the Rich, which shews, our Repinings proceed not, from any defect of Bounty in God, but from the malignant temper of our own Hearts. He's likeliest to find Contentment, who sits at Home, and duely contemplates those Blessings God hath brought within his own reach: of which every man that considers well, will find he hath a fair proportion: and think himself Blessed with what he hath, without being Careful for what he hath not. While he that measures his Poverty, by his Wants, so much he wanteth, as he doth desire. If we set not bounds to our desires, we shall never be satisf'd: If we modestly confine them within the limits God hath set us, to the things we need, and he hath promis'd, (and what pretence have we to claim more, then our Charter gives us; the Covenant-Indenture goes no further then Food and Raiment (m).) Every new accession he superadds, will appear (what it is) a Largess, and Bounty. Glory it self without us, will not make us Happy in Heaven. It can never be well with us, till *our own Souls* be a Heaven (m) Mat. 6 25, &c.

to us; and *Blessedness*, be a *Domestick*, an home-dwelling Inhabitant there: Till we have got a right temper of mind, a settled principle of *Quietude* in our own Breast, and become the Sons of Peace, with whom the peace of God may find Entertainment and Abode: Till we have that Treasure within us, that may render us insensible of any dependance on any foreign Good, or fear of foreign Evil. When *Archelaus* invited *Socrates* to his Court, for his Relief and Advancement, the Philosopher dismiss the Messenger with this Heroick Answer: Tell the King, that a measure of Flour may be bought in Athens for a half-penny, and Water is to be had for nothing; and though your Master supposes I want, yet I have enough, because I am content with a little. *Marcus Cario*, when he had Bribes sent him, to tempt him to be Unfaithful to his Country, was sitting at Dinner with a Dish of Turnips; Well, (saith he to them) that man that can be Content with such Fare as I have, will not be tempted with your Rewards: I thank God, I am Content with this Fare; and as for Rewards, let them be offered to those that cannot be content, as I, with a Dish of Turnips. He that can be satisfied with a hard Bed, and a bare Board, is shorn free from a Thousand Temptations, that prevail on others, to the disturbing, to the

damning of their Souls. Zeno, once very Rich, hearing all his Goods were Cast away in a Ship-wreck, *Fortune* (saith he, speaking in a Heathen dialect) *both dealt well with me, and would have me now study Philosophy.* Socrates, when the State was oppress'd with a Thousand Miseries, always went abroad, and came home, with the same Look; neither more troubl'd, nor less chearful; bearing a Mind smooth and serene on all occasions: far remote from Grief, and above all Fear. When the City was besieg'd, and every one lamented his Condition, he was no more moved, then when it was Flourishing: nothing ruffled or discomposed the even happy Frame of his Soul. He sought not anxiously how to acquire more means, but to accommodate himself to what he had: wherewith he was so Contented, that he affirm'd himself to come nearest the Gods, because he wanted least. One saying, *It was a great matter to abstain from what a man desires*; but, *It's a greater* (answer'd he) *not to desire at all.* And added,

*Care, if by Care ought may effected be,
If not; Why carest thou, when God cares for thee.*

Thrasea, the Martyr under *Nero*, was a Person of that Divine Presence and Discourse that his Friends were Confident, if they could have perswaded him to have stooped so far from the Contempt of Death, as to plead for his Life, and make his defence, that he would have thunder-struck the Senate, and *Nero* himself, who had no other cause of displeasure against him, but his going out of the Senate, as refusing to give his Vote for the Condemnation of *Agrippina*, upon the barbarous motion of her unnatural Son; and his not appearing at the Funeral Solemnities, wherein Divine Honours were conferr'd upon *Poppea*. Through his Belief of the Souls Immortality (of which he was discoursing with *Demetrius* the Philosopher at that instant) he was of so well a composed Mind, that he did not so much as change Countenance (except to a more chearful Aspect) at the news of his Condemnation. And while his Life was breathing out at the Veins of both his Arms, he spent not his breath in Effeminate Lamentations, but in Discourses upon that endless Life, to which he assur'd himself he was hastning: and call'd the *Questor*, who was sent to see his Execution; *Look here* (saith he) *young man, we are pouring out this Offering* (*Jovi liberatori*) *to God Redeemer. I pray God divert the Omen,*

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but verily, thou livest in such Times, as its very bebovesful to get thy Mind fortifi'd against all Temporal Evils, by such examples of Constancy, as thou seest me set before thee. *Anaxarchus* the Philosopher, having sharply reprov'd *Nicoorean*, and being by him ordered to be beaten to Death with Iron Mallets, *Strike on, strike on* (saith he) *thou mayst break in pieces this Vessel of Anaxarchus, but Anaxarchus himself thou canst not touch.* Reproach not Religion, by yielding the day to *Pagan Morality*. Let not the Faith of Christians be out-done by the Heathen Infidelity. Be Ambitious to tell the World in your Lives, a greater then *Marcus Curio*, then *Socrates*, then *Thrasea*, then *Anaxarchus* is here. God abridging good men of this World's Goods, argues not, he envies their Happiness, but that it consists not in them. Whosoever understands the nature of *true Good*, must bid adieu to the hopes of it, in any thing but in God alone; and for those things most state Felicity in, a good man would judge himself unhappy, if he could not despise them. He that cannot want these things, without thinking himself miserable, at once reproaches his Maker, as if he had created him for nothing more worthy, and degrades himself, by intimating such gratifications are most suitable to him. Is that worthy our Esteem,

that attends us for a *little while*, and leaves us *for ever*? Can that be our Happiness, that, when we cease to be Mortal, ceases to be ours? *Faith* makes us judge of Things as they are, not as they appear. This unbinds the Charm, discovers the Illusion of whatsoever is admirable in the Eye of Sense: This unravels the doubts of the intangl'd Mind; corrects the mistakes of the erring Eye; levels the greatest difficulties; clears all the objections against Providence; and makes an Afflicted State, not only tolerable, but so far amiable, as it promotes our supreme Happiness. *Contentment* teaches how to amend our *Lives*, instead of being *weary of them*. It makes the worst Condition here, easie and comfortable, by making the Mind quiet, patient, and thankful. Our prudent prevention of external Evils, patience under them, with our chearful, faithful, diligent Conversation, is a part of that Duty we owe to God; and are indeed the exercise of our Patience, and the Evidences of a Contented Mind. For, he that grows weary of the World, throws off all, and with *Jonah*, wishes to dye; its a sign he wants *true Contentment*; because that consists in a chearful and ready Compliance with the will of God; and not in a froward preference of our own will, or choise: *I pray not that thou shouldest*
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take them out of the World, but that thou should
est keep them from the Evil (n). By running
away from our Task, before the end of the
day, we not only lose our promised Reward
for bearing the Burden and heat of the day,
but are justly obnoxious to be cast into Prison,
for our Rebellion and Disobedience.

He that sets his Love upon that, which
the more he loves, the more he enjoys, is
sure to be free from Discontent; because he
cannot want, he is sure to enjoy that which
he loves: and though he be deprived of o-
ther things, he is not obnoxious to Impati-
ence; because he is sure to retain that which
he most values and affects; which will an-
swer and supply lesser wants with a great
Advantage. I have somewhat of the best
things, I will thankfully enjoy them; and
having Food and Raiment, take the rest as
an over-plus, or want them with Content:
I never will'd not to be Poor; not to be de-
stitute of Relations; not to suffer Sickness
or Reproaches: Other things are the mat-
ter of my Choice, which no man, no acci-
dent can forbid, or deprive me of. What
should I fear, or be vexed at, who may al-
ways be, what I should? who need not be
miserable, unless I will? what Cause have I
to be displeas'd, who may always please

(n) John 17. 15.

God, and my self too? Men may make me suffer, but not *do evil* kill me, but not hurt me. I may be Poor, yet Just, and Content: Ill spoken of, but still I can do well. Preservation from *Sin*, is a greater Mercy, then exemption from *Suffering*. He that lies under the most acute Torment, may see another more sadly cruciated, if not in his Body, by the Agonies of his Mind; and there's no pain so small, but God hath a finger in it, though it be but the aching of the little finger. O Pain, in vain thou attemptest me, so long as I can honestly bear thee; and have so much Cause of Joy, for my healthful frame of Soul; that he hath cur'd me of my Lust, and Avarice, Pride, and Passion, Envy and Revenge; which disorders most mens Minds, and are more formidable, pernicious Evils, then those that distemper their Bodies, and thrust them into *Hospitals*. How should that make me worse, which makes not my self worse? 'Tis not in my power to change my Condition, but it is in my power to attain to such a greatness of mind, as becomes a man; whereby I may be lifted up above the hurt of outward Crosses. It may be in the power of others, to disturb my outward Condition; but it is in my own power, that they shall not disturb my Mind. False Accusations can no more destroy

destroy my Integrity, then a Prison exclude my Comfort. 'Tis not in my power to be handsom, or witty, always in health, or rich ; but it is, to be Good or Virtuous ; to have a healthful, beautiful Soul ; to be rich in good works : To turn Sicknes, and Poverty, into Health, and Riches : to make a bad Case good ; and Advantage, by Losses.

Danger is better then safety ; a Storm, then a perpetual Calm, if before our Fears we were the World's, but after them God's. Who is a loser ? that parts with a Bosom-Companion, and dwells ever after in the Arms of God ; and is inflamed with a greater love of Heavenly things ? that loses a Friend, and gets God for his Father ; a Relation that's far more intimate, indearing, and lasting ? That, if he by his subordinate Instruments remove my Estate, secures me of Riches in Heaven, out of danger, above all accidents and disasters. All Bodily pains and diseases are tolerable and easie, to the pardoned, reconciled, and reformed : *The Inhabitants shall not say I am sick ; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their Iniquity (o).* The most vehement Blasts of this World, shall never intercept the Beams of the Sun of Righteousness, the lifting up the light of his Countenance upon me, which shall put gladness in-

(o) Isa. 23. 24.

to my heart, more then in the time, that my Corn and Wine, my worldly Goods encreased. If he withdraw some Temporal Enjoyments, he will lessen my desires, or give in the more of himself. He can croud a great deal of Comfort, into a little of the Creature. Where the Possessions are low, he can heighten the Fruition; or himself be instead of them. Therefore hath taken upon him the Names of all other Comforts; to intimate, that he is able to stand for all, they signifie, or are worth; our *Portion, Inheritance, Habitation, High Tower, Shield, Shadow, Refuge, Buckler, Horn of Salvation, Strength, Deliverer, Friend, Father, Husband, &c.* Whatsoever Benefit or Helpfulness we meet with *in them*, is in him to be found in a more excellent manner. We have reason to thank the World if it love us not; if it make us place our Comfort and Content in God and a good Conscience. They are unkind, whom we have obliged; but we repent not, if we have done such ungrateful Persons good, and hereafter, place our hopes and expectations above. 'Tis they that injure me, not I, that ought to be troubled; except for their sin, not my own suffering. Let's not, when there is no fault in the *Cause*, make one in the *Calamity*; since, we ought rather to render *double praise*, for our Afflictions,

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ons, and for our Innocency. When we are punish'd for our Crimes, we ought to have Patience; but when we suffer innocently, we may well add Gladness to it. Whatsoever is not pleasant, may be useful, so ought to be acceptable.

When I am unloaden of my Luggage, I am lighter for my Journey; that calls me away to my true Riches, where my heart is already. It's but a *Moveable* that's removed; my *Inheritance* is incorruptible, undefiled, fadeth not away. A little Money serves the *Traveller* that hath but a little way to go. *Parum viae, quid multum viatici?* It's no dishonour, or prejudice to a *Pilgrim*, to want that, which would be a Weight, a Burden, an Impediment. To him, not only, a little sufficeth, but much is troublesome. He's a *Stranger*, not only to his residence, but to himself; and is, rather where he is not, then where he is. Earth is not the place where I am to expect Glory, or Greatness; I shall have enough above, and here too, so I can keep within my self, and look upon other things with an indifferent eye. This is but my *Pilgrimage*, my passage, (not my Countrey, or place of rest) at most, my abode for a night; where I must expect bad usage, a troublesome, uneasie, uncomfortable passage; sicknesses, losses, affronts, disgraces,

graces, tempestuous Weather, rough Companions, that will turn me *out* of my way, or jostle, bespatter, throw dirt upon me *in* it. This kind of usage or condition, is but according to the Law, the Custom of the place, the common Condition of things in it. I will not be solicitous for better Accommodations, where I must make so short a stay, and be gone: all will be amended when I come to my Journeys end, the place of my rest and happiness. Shall I leave off thoughts of going home, because I see some handsome Inns by the Way? or another Road cross it: Be startled when I meet with one dissatisfaction, where I look for many? I doubt not to receive, what I can justly desire: I fear not to suffer the wrongs which I do not do. I am in no danger by reason of *him* who loves me as his Friend, and hath so secur'd the Interest of all those who have consigned themselves to his care, that they are *ever happy*, nothing can make them miserable. I am fully content with my particular allowance; the Countrey whether I am going, shall content me with the meanest Entertainment upon my *Road* unto it. I have no power to make it all plain; nor have bargain'd with God to make it so for me. I do not think there is any difficulty in the Divine Methods, because I understand them

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not : not appoint him a time to bestow those Courtesies, which I do not absolutely pray, that I may receive. I do not desire that he should alter the course of his Providence, to accommodate my present condition. Neither will I think that any thing falls out amiss, though he permit that which I unjustly suffer from my Adversaries, not to be rectified in this Life ; since I know it will, to my infinite advantage, be set in order in another. Since the general Randevouz of all Happiness, is only there to be expected, where my Journey ends, my mind shall be always fix'd upon it ; I will comfort my self all the way, with the thoughts of what I shall enjoy, when I come unto it. A Traveller reckons of Storms, and Tempests, ill Way, foul Weather, hard Entertainment, homely Fare, strange Usage : is content with any thing, makes shift with every Inconvenience, minds not others Sayings, Doings, or Possessions, as he passes on ; some are Chiding, others Dancing, others Plowing, others Building, &c. whilst he's not at leisure to think of any thing, but his dear Countrey. Sets not his heart on his Inn, which he must leave next Morn : seeks not for Honours, or Offices in it. All his care is, how he may pass safe, and well, and quietly ; he hath enough at home. Here we have Houses, as Foxes have Holes,

Holes, and *Birds* of the Air have Nests, to be chas'd and driven from them at pleasure. No continuing City, but we seek one to come. And, who would not contentedly go through a Prison to a Palace? a Barren Wilderness, to a Land of Promise? endure the Cross, and despise the Shame, for the Joy set before us? The days of mourning will be ere long over. If our Cross be heavy, we have but a little way to carry it. Nothing that hath an end, can make a man truly happy, or miserable. This is but a step of ill way, a pleasant one is dearly bought with the loss of Home. 'Tis a very fallacious Inference in any, to argue unkindness in any temporal Want or Suffering, who hath a Title to an Eternal Inheritance and Reward. Were this Earth Hell, and the Men in it Devils, all the Sufferings we could undergo, were not worthy to be compared to our future Happiness. What car'd the *Proto-Martyr St. Stephen*, for gnashing Teeth, sparkling Eyes, killing Stones, Heaven made them *precious*. Our Thoughts, which bring us in nothing but trouble and vexation, would as soon bring us in joy and pleasure, did we turn them to proper Objects. A thought of the heavenly Glory, is as soon thought as of an earthly Cross. We complain, the World troubles us, then, What do we there? Why

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Get we not up by the Elevation of our Souls, into that quieter Region? What trouble would the thoughts of future Happiness be unto us? O! who would not expect, that a *Journey* which hath so blessed an *end*, and so good Accommodations by the *way*, should be passed, with all imaginable chearfulness and alacrity? That we should live here Learners and Practitioners of that State of unmixed, interminable Joy, to which we aspire? The most formidable Calamities of this World, are below all measure of comparison, to that Happiness, which admits of no *Hyperbole*, intailed on patient Sufferers under them.

The Example of CHRIST.

CONsidering our great *Exemplar* of *Suffering* and *Patience*, how can we be *Impatient Sufferers*? Who can be troubled at *Want*, that worships a *God*, willing to live and dye in *Sorrow*? His Mother not rich enough to bring a Lamb for an Offering; a few Barley Loaves and Fishes, provision for his Train? Or value *Esteem*, when he was so undervalued, traduced, envied, reproached, betrayed by his own Servant, abandoned by all his Disciples except one, who followed him
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longest, to renounce him the more shamefully by a three-fold abjuration; put to Death by his Country-men; his Tribute paid by a Fish; his Triumphs solemniz'd by another's Asses-Colt; Born among Beasts; Liv'd, if not upon Alms, among Publicans; Dy'd among Thieves; his Birth without a Cradle; his Burial, without a Rag, or Grave of his own; and, the price of his Blood buys a Burial-place for Strangers. What lower degree of Poverty, then to take his Beginning in a Stable? to make his End on a Dunghil? noisom and ignominious through the Carcasses and Offences of the Executed? where he offered a Sacrifice of sweet smelling savour unto God, and purchased Glory unto Men.

Why wouldst *thou* not, whose is the Earth, and the fulness thereof, raise to thy self a Palace compiled of those pretious Stones, which lie hid in the close Coffer of that thy inferiour Treasury? and command all the *Potentates* of the Earth to attend thy Train, with the glorious Retinue of blessed Angels? Why did not thy stately Followers, glitter in their shining Liveries? and the quintessence of all this World's Delicacies, appear to furnish thy Table? Since thou wouldest come to our *Earth*, why wouldest thou not enjoy the best Entertainment it could give thee?

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But from the supereminent heighth of Glory, stoop to abase thy self to the sufferance of Extremities and Indignities; and sink thy self to the bottom of Abjectedness, to exalt our Condition to the contrary Extreme? How should we learn both to want, and abound from *thee*, when abounding with the Glory and Riches of Heaven, wouldest want a Lodging in thy first Welcome to the World? How can it deject us to be rejected of the World, which is none of ours, when thou camest to thy own, and thy own received thee not? What wonder for thy Servants to walk about in Sheep-skins, and Goat-skins, destitute, afflicted, tormented; when their Lord is denyed harbor, and safety for his Life? Why wouldest thou be thus homely, but that, by contemning worldly Glory, thou mightest teach us to do so: and sanctifie Poverty unto them, whom thou callest unto Want? That, since thou, who hadst the choice of all earthly Conditions, wouldest be born poor, and live despised, those which must want out of necessity, might not think their Poverty grievous? Who can murmur and repine under the hardest Usages, that considers thou (who knew all from the beginning) chose to suffer uncivil men to crowd thee with the Horse and the Ass in a publick Stable; to have Contempt thrown upon thy Pover-

Poverty ; and Neglect added to all Inconveniences ; not only to *appear mean*, but even to force others to *think meanly of thee* ? He that made all places, finds none himself, and is content : he that hath *many Mansions* for others in his Father's House, hath not the least privacy in an Inn, and complains not, repines not at it. He that would have given his churlish Host an eternal House in Heaven for asking for, cannot have the least part of his here, because his Parents seem poor, yet fetches not down Fire to consume him for his Inhumanity. None will have cause to complain of his coarse Robes, hard Bed, thin Table and Attendance, that calls to mind, how it was with the *great King*. Those *Idols* of the World's esteem, (Riches and Honour) are so far from making us *truly Happy*, that they are not of themselves eligible, in the number of *good things*. No man is to be asham'd of, or disquieted with *innocent Poverty*, of which *our Lord* made Election : or worthy to be his Member, that suffered so much for other men's sins, who cannot endure so little Affliction, if not for his sake, yet for his own. The best Expedient to shame us out of Repinings, is, often to draw this uneven parallel : confront our petty uneasinesses, with his unspeakable Torments : It's impossible then, surely, but our *Admirati-*

on, and *Gratitude* must supplant our *Impatience*. Delicate, tender *Members*, are undecent, unbecoming a *Head* stuck full of *Thorns*. Our heaviest *Crosses* are but *Chips*, or *Shavings* to his.

He that taketh not up his cross, and followeth him, [is not worthy of him;] as not having the *Courage*, the *Constancy*, the *Sincerity* of a *Christian*, or of one pretending to so great *Benefits*, such high *Priviledges*, such excellent *Rewards* as he proposes; not worthy of the *Honour* to wait upon him; *cannot be his disciple*; not capable to be reckon'd among them; shewing such an incapacity to learn, declaring such an indisposition to transcribe those needful *Lessons* of *Humility*, *Patience*, *Self-resignation*, *submission* to the *Divine Will*, so fairly set him by the *Instruction* and *Example* of him who suffered for us, leaving us an *Example* that we should follow his steps.

If my *Head* but ache, I lay it down on a soft *Pillow*, to ease my pain, and lessen my grief; whilst thou hast no *Death-bed*, but a *Cross*, or *Boulster*, but of *Thorns*, whereon to lay thy weak and wearied *Head*; no *Cloaths* to cover, or shelter thee from the stormy *Cold*, but those of *Innocency*. When I am *Sick*, my *Friends* about me bestir themselves to ease my diseased *Body*, and revive my fainting

fainting Spirits with Cordials and comfortable words: while the only Succour thou about thee afford, are bitter Scoffs, and Wine mingled with Gall at thy hour of Death. How may my Face be confounded with shame, who am so way-ward and impatient to suffer a light Affliction, for, or from thee, who endur'd such extreme, unpitied Torments for me?

Can we now imagine it a very happy thing, to be High and Prosperous in the World? to swim in affluence and Pleasure? Can we take it for a Misery to be Mean and Low? to conflict with Wants and Straits here, seeing the Fountain of all Happiness purposely condescended to so forlorn a State, and was pleas'd to become so deep a Sufferer?

Beholding this Tragic Spectacle, with devout eyes of our minds, How can we but disregard the deceitful Vanities, the mischievous Delights of this World? How can we but reconcile our Minds to the worst Condition, support our Hearts under the heaviest Pressures, submit chearfully to, gladly accept of the Divine Disposal, however grievous and afflicted to our natural Will? Can we reasonably expect? can we ardently desire? can we eagerly affect great Prosperity, when our Lord tasted such Adversity? Can we admire those splendid Trifles which he

never

never regarded in his Life, and which at his Death only served to mock and abuse him? Can we relish those sordid Pleasures, of which he willingly vouchsafed not to taste, and the Contraries whereof he dying, chose to bear in the extremity? Can we disdain or despise a State of Sorrow and Disgrace, when he by voluntary susception of it, hath so dignified and graced, by which we so nearly resemble, and become so conformable to him, concur and partake with him, yea, by which in some Cases we may promote, and after a sort, compleat his designs, filling up that which is behind, of the Afflictions of Christ in our flesh? Who can now hugely prefer, being esteemed, approved, favoured, commended by men, before their infamy, reproach, derision, persecution? Who can be ambitious of worldly Honour, or Repute, covetous of Wealth, or greedy of Pleasure, who observes him chusing rather to hang upon a Cross, than sit upon a Throne: Inviting the Clamours of Scorn and Spite, rather than Acclamations of Blessing and Praise: Devesting himself of all secular Power, Pomp, Plenty, Conveniency, and Solace: Embracing the Garb of a Slave, the Repute of a Malefactor; before the Dignity and Respect of a Prince, which were his Due, which he most easily could have obtained.

Here

Here thou healedst all that came unto thee; far be it from me, to think thy *Glory* hath abated of thy *Power*, of thy *Mercy*, of thy *Compassion*: that the *Head* is less pitiful on the Throne, then on the Foot-stool. In all our Afflictions, thou art afflicted. Still and ever, thou art our assured, faithful, all-sufficient *Physitian*, and healest all that come unto thee in our Maladies! 'tis as impossible we should want help, as thou *Power*, and *Mercy*. No *Disease* shall ever thrust any of thy Patients into the Grave, till thou turn the Key, and open it. Give me but as much *Comfort* in this my Sorrow, as thou givest me *Security*, and at my worst I shall do well.

Now is the time of my great Providence, and Patience, Fortitude, and Courage: to bring forth that Store, I have been so long gathering: to practise that Christianity, I have so pleasantly, so peaceably professed. O! let my temper, and moderation appear in this difficulty. Let the World see the fruit of my *Religion*; that there is more in it then a bare Name; that I can wisely digest my own desires; as well advise my self, as others. 'Tis a scandal to Religion, to afflict our selves with great and heavy Sadness; whilst patient Sufferings, are highly instructive to our Brethren. Where is the Consolation of Holy Scripture? Where is the fruit of Preaching

ing? Where is the sweetness of Prayer? Where is the Counsel of wise Men? Where is the Result of Experience? Where is the Exercise of Faith, and Love, and Patience? Where are my good Thoughts, Purposes, and Resolutions, so well taken in the time of my Prosperity, to be an example of Courage to the rest of Mankind? Where is that Cloud of Witnesses, of so many patient ones, whose Constancy I have so oft admired? Especially, *my Lord and Saviour*, the most glorious Character of Patience, and Submission; Freedom, and Courtesie; Candor, and Ingenuity; Lowliness, and Humility; Gentleness, and Meekness; Charity and Compassion; Kindness, and Affability; Mildness, and Forgiveness; Trust, and Confidence. An *Abyss* of Love, of Mercy, of Dolor, of Ignominy, of Blood, of Loathing, of Excess, of Admiration, of Amazement; which swelleth all Thoughts, drieth up all Tears, stoppeth all Mouths, easeth all Pains, drencheth all Conceptions, dims the Lustre of all Earthly Grandure and Beauty, damps the Scenes of all Carnal delights and satisfaction, quashes all that extravagant Glee, which we can find in any wild Frolick, or Rictous Merriment; staineth all our Pride, checks all Wantonnesses, disposeth our Minds to perfect submission to God's Will, before Com-

pliance with the Fancies and Desires of Men. Who can now complain, he doth, or suffereth too much? or is treated with less tenderness then he deserves? All I endure, is nothing, to what I should, and thou didst for me, O Saviour; the Contemplation and Application of thy Sufferings, is enough to sweeten a whole Life of Bitterness. I care not how unpleasant a Portion I find here, so the Power and Virtue of thy precious Death may season it to my Soul.

The Conclusion of the foregoing Considerations.

AND now methinks amidst these Thoughts, it is no uneasie thing, in all Estates to be Content: And, not so much to Suffer, as Receive all that happens; as if I would not have it fall out otherwise. Methinks I could now extract, gain out of Losses, and stand upon the Ruines of them, saying, I have lost nothing; make Damage itself, give Interest, for whatever it takes from me; The croffest Accidents, Advantage, comply with, and serve my main Concern; and my very Enemies, tributary to my Welfare.

Oh! how unconcern'd might I pass through the Allurements and Allightments of this Flattering, Molesting, Tumultuous, busie World, but
for

for my base, distrustful, evil Heart of Unbelief, in departing from the Living God; who by his own Communication, can make a rich amends for the loss of any Temporal Concernments; and deliver me from the want of them, even while they are wanting. That will not fail to give Patience, if not Peace, Contentment if not Riches, *Submission to his Will*, if not the fulfilling of *my own*. And, 'tis almost all one, never to be *in Want*, or never to be *without Contentment*.

Was my Treasure in Heaven, and my Heart fixed there, upon the Center of my Bliss and Happiness; how unmov'd would the Rumours of Wars, and Devastations find, and leave me; which invade, and agitate mens Breasts, and so disturb their most pleasant compos'd Hours. I should let him alone to rule the World, that made it; to take care of me and mine, who hath engag'd it; who cannot but do it; whose Care and Providence watches over me; whose Eye, and Ear, and Arms, are open to me; whose Bowels yearn for me; whose Blood purchas'd me; whose eternal Blessedness awaits me.

Had I conquer'd my Inclinations to *things below*, and rais'd my Mind above *their* Crosses and Contents: Did I always retain a profound Indifference for all those various Fan-

cies which trouble and disquiet the doting Worldling, and its fond Admirers: How confidently, undauntedly, might I march among them; dreadful, unshaken, unconfused; despising all that, which is the strife and vexation, toil, and ruin of Mankind.

Were I but once arriv'd at a true indifference of Mind; Acquiescence in, Resignation, ready Compliance to Infinite Wisdom, Power, and Goodness; and fear'd doing, instead of suffering Evil: How Serene? how full of Tranquility should I be, amidst the Changes, Commotions, Tumults, and Convulsions, of this stormy Region, this uncertain State? Though my Lot fell in that Age, that stands next the Worlds last Calenture, when the whole frame of Nature shall be in an Agony, and burning Fit?

Did my Faith give me a constant lively view, of those *Rewards* of Vertue God hath promis'd; and his Followers are now Blessed in: How secure should I sit from the Blasts of Fortune, in that place of uninterrupted perfect Joy; and look down with Compassion, Scorn, and Indignation, upon this little Mole-hill of busie Ants, as Fools and Mad-men; though all the World conspir'd to make me miserable.

Oh! Could I but be taken up more with the Love of God; had I an absolute *Empire* over

over my Passions; did I rightly embrace the Reconciliation wrought with him through Jesus Christ, and maintain'd that Faith by good Works (without which Food, it falls into a shaking Palsie, and pines away) were I always careful of pleasing him, and my own Conscience: Might I but see, and feel the loveliness of my dear Redeemer, till my heart was fill'd, and raviht with that Love. Had I but more of the Spirit of Adoption, and those filial Affections to my Heavenly Father: Could I but breath and pant more earnestly after him, and maintain a constant Correspondence and Communion with him: How little should I value? how easily could I spare those Trifles the purblind World admire? How careless should I be, who had the Pleasures, Honours, Riches of it? How far should I be from envying of them? I would pity the miserable *Tyrants* of this World, as *Slaves*, and worse then *Beggars*, that tast not of that Kingdom of Love and Pleasure which dwells in a true Believers Breast? I would bear the loss of other things, with the same frame of Spirit, I enjoy'd them; refuse to part with no enjoyment, to secure this, and follow all the Pomp, and Pleasure of the World to the Grave, without a sad Heart, or a sorrowful Countenance. I would sit down contentedly, in a sense of

An Infallible Way

my *Father's Love*, though I had nothing else; yea, reckon I had all, if I wanted not this. Rest satisfi'd if I have but a *Father in Heaven*, though I have never a *Friend upon Earth*; shew us the *Father*, and it sufficeth us. Death it self should not dismay me; but be welcom'd with *Joy and Gladness*, as an *Auxiliary* sent from God, to give me the *Day and Triumph* over all my *Conflicts*: To free from the *Troubles*, and *Uneasiness* of a wretched Life. That takes off all our *Burdens*, strikes the sweat off our *Brow*, calls us for ever off our war-fare, sounds the joyful *Retreat* from all our *Conflicts*, frees the *Captive* without *Ransom*, dismisses the *Oppressed*, without the consent of the *Oppressor*; brings home the *Banished*, in spite of the *Banisher*; heals the *Sick*, without pain of *Physick*; mends all marred *Fortunes*; repairs all *Damages* and *Disasters*; makes even all *Disorders* and *Inequalities*; necessitates us to be no more miserable. The dust of the *Grave* will dry up our *Tears*, bury all our *Cares* in *Silence* and *Oblivion*. We shall have a sure *Repose* in that *Bed of Rest*, and never be put to the *Hazzard* of a *Battel* more. His everlasting *Arms* stand open to receive and *Crown* us, (as soon as the *Fight* is over) in that quiet *Region*, where all *Evil* is separated from us; no *Enemy* to appear against us, no discomposure,

posure, interruption, or end of perfect Joy, Tranquillity and Happiness. Where patient, chearful, enduring hardship in our *War-fare*, is recorded, reckon'd among our *Faithful Services*; light Afflictions for a moment, rewarded with a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory. Where we shall put off our *Helmet*, and put on our *Crown*; exchange the whole Armour of God, for Robes and Diadems, Scepters and Palms; Ensigns of Kings, and Conquerours. Where are *Mansions* made ready for us, that call *Escurials*, *Lowres*, the stateliest, proudest Structures, but better modell'd *Dungbils*, - lessening into inconsiderableness, undiscernableness. A solid secure resting place, after our weary Pilgrimage, in our *Father's House and Love*; liable to no Injury, Repair, or Decay, Hazard, or Calamity, Fire, or Storm, Thief, or Moth, Disturbance, Disinheritance, or Ejectment. Where he will familiarly converse with, and entertain all his *Domesticks*, his *Followers*; who shall be, not as unconcern'd Spectators, but interested Possessors, glorified together with him. Where the *Tree of Knowledge* shall be without Enclosure: and the most voluptuous *Epicurism* in reference to it, be innocent. Where there shall be neither *Lust* nor *forbidden Fruit*. Where the pleasure of Speculation shall be without the *Toil*; and

that Maxim be eternally antiquated, *He that encreases Knowledge, encreaseth Sorrow.* Where we shall discern the apt Conjunctions, and admirable Dependancies of things, which, when acted upon the Stage of this World, seem'd so cross, so perplex'd, so full of misterious Intricacy. Where we shall for ever contemplate the extent of that All-creating, All-ruling Power, the principle of all action, life, and motion through the whole Creation, that turns the mighty Wheel of Providence, throughout the succession of all time. Where Goodness, Grace, and Mercy shall be fully opened; and the difficulty vanish, of reconciling *fatherly Severity*, with *Love*. Where after all discomposures here, our Spirits shall return to a consistency; and the same invariable appearances of Glory, be always present, without being sullied, obscured, or in a declination. Where the Law of Sin, shall never check the Law of God; but all rebellious Reluctancies, Contentions, Contradictions cease for ever. No more Reproaches, Oppressions, or Persecutions. No more false Accusations, halings into Prisons, draggings before Tribunals. No more wandering into Desarts, in Sheep skins, in Goat-skins, in Dens, and Caves of the Earth. All Infirmities, sinful Inclinations, and Indispositions, unmortified

Cor-

Corruptions, tumultuous Passions, Storms, and Tempests, Fears, and Cares, Pains, Diseases, Distempers, and Uneasinesses, are wholly cured and removed, have now found a Period, are for ever vanish'd and done away.

THE

And (the usual Effects of it)

POVERTY.

Psalm. 4. 8.

En-
I will not be moved, neither will I be troubled; for I have said, I will not be moved, neither will I be troubled.

I
Nnumerable Evils molest and afflict the Ungodly: the troublesome Conscience, of Fears, and Jealousies, and distempered Affections, crowd in upon them, and continually harass them, when they have no others: divine, born of, or spring from their Nature. Their sleep is broken, and they are from

Encouragement

Against the

Fear of Fire,

And (the usual Effects of it)

POVERTY.

Psal. 4. 8.

*I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for
thou Lord only makest me dwell in safety.*

INnumerable Evils molest and afflict the
Ungodly: the troublesome *Companions*
of Fears, and Jealousies, and dismal
Apprehensions, croud in, surprize, and
continually haunt them, when they have no
others: deprive them of, or disturb their na-
tural Rest. Their Sleep is broken, or departs
from

Encouragement against Fire. 145

from them. They are no where safe and free from *Fear*, or insensible of their *Danger*; always exposed to it (being under Divine Displeasure) and discharged from all kind of Protection. Neither God, nor Angels, undertake to defend, or preserve them, or theirs. Whilst those that are *truly Good*, of the same Spirit, and in the same Condition with *David*, have a full perswasion that they are Reconciled to God, in his Love and Favour, under the light of his Countenance: they are on good grounds, free from all inordinate Disturbances, and Disquietments of Soul: and enjoy a Serenity both of *State* and *Mind*. It's not enough for us that we are *safe*, unless we *think our selves so*: that we have *freedom* and *safety* of *Spirit*, and of *Condition*; both which are the gift of God, to those who cast all their care and fear, place all their confidence on him, rely upon his Providence and Protection, who only sustains, supports, and upholds them, and their Habitations: is the cause of their fearlessness, and security: pacifies, and quiets, when nothing else will, or can: causes them to be unconcern'd for probable Calamities: to be *mindful of nothing but their Duty*; as knowing, their God whom they serve, is able to deliver them, and that he will deliver them (a). That they secure-

(a) Dan. 3. 17.

ly compose themselves, with the man after God's own heart, saying, *I will both lye me down in peace, and sleep; for thou Lord only makest me to dwell in safety.*

They are fully satisfied of his Affection towards them, his continual Care of them, his Providence over them. That their Helper is always with them, nearer then their Danger, and when in the midst of it, they are under the shadow of his Wings. That all Elements are commanded and restrained by him. That all things are in his Power, and at his Disposal: and that he will neither do, nor suffer any thing, but what shall make most for *their* good and benefit. That nothing comes by blind Chance and Necessity. That all things are managed, and disposed by Sovereign Reason, and Wisdom; whose eye is always upon them, who is engaged to protect and succour them. What then can happen, that should molest or displease them? How can he that firmly believes him most powerful and able, most kind and willing, ever present, and ready to help him, be in any case disconsolate? or despair of seasonable Relief? or take any thing amiss, as if it could happen *better*, then, as infinite Goodness pleaseth, and infinite Wisdom determines? *That's best*, which is the work of God. The World cannot be better at this

Instant

instant, then it is: nor any thing (which is the work of God) better; because it is as he willeth it to be: but when he changeth them, 'twill then be best, that they are changed.

We should therefore, not only be satisfied with, and acquiesce in, but praise and adore all Occurrences of Providence, how distasteful soever to sense; concluding, a just and reasonable cause lyeth under them; tho' undiscernable to us. He can do us no wrong, if he would, such is his essential holiness; he would do us no wrong if he could, such is his infinite justice: he will do nothing but what's consistent with infinite Wisdom, Goodness, Mercy, and every perfection; And how unreasonable is it, not to submit to all these? If the *Will* of the Saints in Heaven were not perfectly conform'd to the *Will* of God, they could not be free from Misery: *Abraham* would be ever and anon grieving to think of *Dives*, and others in his direful State. It's our perfection, ease, and happiness, cheerfully to comply with, and refer all to the good pleasure of God. If we make his *Will*, our own, we shall have all things we desire: Command all Events, bear the loss of any thing without repining against him, who indeed, is the true Proprietor. We shall never differ with him about that which is his own. We shall have peace with him,

him, whatsoever we undergo. As willingly suffer any thing from him, as for him. That which is grievous to particular persons, may be good for the Publick; grievous to the Body, good for the Soul; grievous at present, good for the future, tho we see it not now. No evil can befall him that wholly resigns himself, and all he hath, to the Will of God.

Who should rule the World, but he that made it, that upholds it by the Word of his Power? or dispose of us and ours, but him whose we are, in whom we believe, and whom we serve? Who, or whatsoever the Instruments are, it's enough for us, that, the Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh, (b). He distributeth to every man, even, as he will. The Lord make poor, and maketh rich; he bringeth low, and lifteth up (c). Shall there be evil in a City, and the Lord hath not done it? He causeth it to Rain upon one City, and not upon another (d), upon Sodom and Gomorrah, and not upon Zoar (e). What Houses or Goods in it, to be consum'd, or preserv'd? There's such an Hedge about the Person, and Substance of every good man; about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath, on every side, that none of them can be touch'd

(b) Job. 1. 21. (c) 1 Sam. 2. 7. (d) Am. 3. 6. and 4. 7. (e) Gen. 19. 21, &c.

with-

without divine permission (f). *Fire, and Hail, Snow, and Vapour, stormy Winds* (while laying waste, are) *fulfilling his Word* (g). Who saith unto them, hitherto shall ye go, and no further. All Creatures, Elements, wicked men, have *no power* at all against us, except it be given them from above (h). Our *Houses* as well as our most Minute-parts (the hair of our head) are under the protection of the same all-watchful Providence: when we make *them Churches* (i), he will make them *Sanctuaries*, places of Safety, and Refuge to us (k).

The *Cattle* as well as *Infants*, is brought in by God; as an Argument to spare *Nineveh* (l). He regardeth whatsoever he hath made. He preserveth man and beast (m), particularly is stiled the *preserver of men* (n). *The Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe* (o). The Guardian and Protector of all good men. He will never in the least neglect them, much less abandon the Care of them (p).

So far as *Temporals* are good for them, he hath as much secured to them, as eternal life. *He will give Grace and Glory, no good*

- (f) Job 1. 10. (g) Ps. 148. 8. (h) John 19. 11.
 (i) Rom. 16. 5. (k) Isa. 8. 14. (l) Jon. 4. 11.
 (m) Psal. 36. 6. (n) Job 7. 20. (o) 1 Tim. 4. 10.
 (p) Heb. 13. 5.

thing will be withhold from them that walk uprightly. They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing (q). Lay not wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous; spoil not his resting places (r). When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid; yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet (s). My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places (t). Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely (v). He that hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evils (w). Whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe (x). The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them (y). Behold, he that keepeth Israel, shall neither slumber nor sleep (z). (They must needs be safe, whom God keeps.) The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord, he is their strength in the time of trouble, and the Lord shall help them, and deliver them, because they trust in him (a). The Lord is a strong hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him (b). He that's assured these declarations and promises, were not made to mock, or deceive him, but seriously made, and will certainly be

- (q) Psal. 84. 11. and 34. 10. (r) Psal. 24. 15.
 (s) Psal. 3. 24. (t) Isa. 32. 18. (v) Isa. 32. 16.
 (w) Psal. 1. 33. (x) Psal. 22. 25. (y) Psal. 34. 7.
 (z) Psal. 121. 5. (a) Psal. 37. 39, &c. (b) Na. 1. 7.

perform'd, How free must his mind be from all solicitude, and anxiety? How steady a calm, how sweet a serenity, will a firm belief, spread over his Soul, in regard of all contingencies and disasters? Could we but as steadfastly believe his Promises, as he will certainly perform them, to them that do; they would as much refresh us, as their performance could.

The blessedness of the righteous here, consists, not in freedom from suffering, but satisfaction in it. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Blessed is the man that endureth temptation (c). Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth (d). Take my Brethren, the Prophets (and Apostles) for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience (e). Who were, as sorrowful, yet always rejoycing; as poor, yet making many rich, as having nothing, and yet possessing all things (f). As if they had only the shadow of evil, but really the substance of all good. When he sees it best for us, not to prelerve us from, he will support us under (as great a mercy as to be delivered out) comfort us in, reward us for all our tribulations. His grace shall be sufficient for us (g). He will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able; but will with the temptation also make

(c) Ja. 5. 11. and 1. 12. (d) Job 6. 17. (e) Ja. 5. 10. (f) 1 Cor. 6. 10. (g) 2 Cor. 12. 9.

a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it (b). He hath commanded us to be careful for nothing (i). To cast all our care upon him, because he careth for us (k). All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth, unto such as keep his covenant, and his testimonies. His delight is in them that fear him, and put their trust in his mercy. And upon these terms we may plead it with, and expect it from him. Preserve me for I am holy, save thy servant that putteth his trust in thee. I am thine, save me (l). He hath promised to give us contented minds under all his dealings with us. The fear of the Lord sendeth to life, and he that hath it, shall abide satisfied: he shall not be visited with evil, his soul shall dwell at ease (m). Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee (n).

A dejected spirit lives much beneath the rate of Christian Principles and Privileges. There's a holy chearfulness and greatness of Mind, that becomes the saddest Providence. At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh (o). When in the habitual bent of our Souls, we desire to please God, we are to discharge our selves of all unsutable Cares; and abandon all suspicious hard thoughts of him. Be

(b) 1 Cor. 10. 13. (i) Phil. 4. 7. (k) 1 Pet. 5. 7. (l) Ps. 25. 10. 147. 11. and 86. 2. (m) Prov. 19. 23. and 29. 13. (n) Isa. 26. 3. (o) Job 5. 22.

deeply concern'd for *his Concernments*, without any apprehension, or fear, that he will neglect *those* which are most truly ours. Can men excel God in praise-worthy Actions? Any one Relation (as Father, Friend, Husband, Brother, &c.) where there's Affection, is a great security for our trust. How much more then when they meet all in one? Will he not take care of his own, who hath put so ill a note on them that do not, to be worse then *Infidels* (p)? Will you think *he can be such a one*? Religion lyes much in trusting God, and living a life of Faith. They strangely mistake it, that think it consists in doubts, distrusts, and fears. When *Borromaus* was told of some that lay in wait for his Life, he cheerfully answered, *An Deus est in Mundo pro nibil?* What, is God in the World for nought? *Paulus Camilius* being made the Roman General; as soon as he came to the Camp, every one was forward to give him *their Advice*; Have you a Care (saith he to them) but to fight well, and I'll take care of the rest. Our Duty is, faithfully to discharge it, and to let God alone to take Care of us, and ours; as being propt with an Arm upon which all the Crowns of the Earth might Repose the care of their conservation.

What can discompose him, who knows
(p) 1 Tim. 5. 8.

him.

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himself (if he pleases) immoveably happy. That his best Goods are secure from all at-
taques, and beyond the reach of any misfor-
tune. That, desiring what is best, he can-
not fail of his desire. *The desire of the righte-
ous shall be granted* (q). That (himself ex-
cepted) all the World cannot wrong, or hurt
him. *There shall no evil happen to the just* (r).
If he be rendered harbourless, thinks it not
strange concerning the fiery Tryal, which
is to try him, as though some strange thing
happened unto him (s). Our Lord and Ma-
ster had not where to lay his head (t). His
faithful Followers, of whom the World was
not worthy, wandered in Desarts, and in
Mountains, and in Dens and Caves of the
Earth, (v) and had no certain Dwelling-
place (w). And took joyfully the spoiling
of their Goods, knowing in themselves that
they had in Heaven, a better, and an endu-
ring substance (x). *Poverty is made easie*, by
a *contented mind*, and not a trouble by envy
at more plentiful Fortunes. Why should we
much value those splendid toys, that sordid
trash, men so eagerly pursue? or amuse our
selves with trivial matters; *impertinent*, at
least, if not *prejudicial* to our *main Concern*?

(q) Prov. 10. 14. (r) Prov. 12. 21. (s) 1 Pet. 4. 12.
(t) Mat. 8. 20. (v) Heb. 11. 38. (w) 1 Cor. 4. 11.
(x) Heb. 10. 34.

What

What are our *Bodies* too much pampered, but as so many reeking Dung-hills, annoying our Souls, with ill steems, and vapours? Are we fitter for any Service of God or Man, for having *more then will satisfie hunger*? And we undervalue, dishonour, reproach, our heavenly Father, to *doubt of Necessaries*: Hired Servants have Bread enough and to spare, in a good man's House (y). The great House-keeper of the World, will not starve any of his Family. The young Lyons seek their Meat from God; what they gather, or meet with in their pursuit, is his Gift to them. He giveth to the Beast his Food, and to the young Ravens (Birds of prey) when they cry (z), of as small value as Sparrows are, not one of them are forgotten before God (a). He that feeds the Fowls of the Air, and cloaths the Grass of the Field, will not starve us, though unable, if willing, to toil or spin, sow, or reap, or gather into Barns. He never suffers those of a diligent hand, a frugal, merciful disposition, to want (tho he may, pride, prodigality, idleness). *David*, when old, had never seen the Righteous forsaken, nor his (righteous) Seed begging Bread (b). He makes their Enemies at peace with them, to be kind unto them: to be pitied of those that

(y) Lu. 15. 17. (z) Ps. 104. 27. and 147. 9. (a) Lu. 12. 6. (b) Psal. 37. 25.

carry

What

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carry them away Captive (c). And the barbarous People to shew them no little kindness (d).

We shall be satisfied with what the fire leaves, if, having Food and Rayment, we can (as we ought) be therewith content (e). *Jacob* indented with God for no more then *Bread to eat, Rayment to put on* (f). *Agar* prays only for *Food convenient*, and deprecates *Riches* (g). *A hundred* that were the *Lord's Prophets*, lived in a Cave with *Bread and Water* (h). The *Israelites* for their murmuring when they enjoy'd that, were destroy'd of the Destroyer (i). What a Feast would a Belly-full of it been, when an Asses Head was Sold for fourscore Pieces of Silver: and the fourth part of a Cab of Doves Dung, for five Pieces of Silver (k)? Are we better then *Lazarus*, who would have been glad of the Crums that fell from the rich man's Table? then *John the Baptist*, who was cloathed in Camels Hair, a leathern Girdle about his Loyns, his Meat, Locusts, and wild Honey? Would the habit of sheep-skins, and goat-skins, become us worse then the Primitive Worthies (l)? Shall we not be content with mean, with any Dwellings; when Dens and Caves satisfied better then we? How many

(c) *Pal.* 106. 46. (d) *Acts* 26. 2. (e) *1 Tim.* 6. 8.

(f) *Gen.* 28. 20. (g) *Prov.* 30. 8. (h) *1 Kin.* 18. 4.

(i) *1 Cor.* 10. 10. (k) *2 Kin.* 6. 25. (l) *Heb.* 11. 37.

wan-

wandred forty years in a barren Wilderness,
(d) having no Houses; rejoycing in this, Lord,
fire than hast been our dwelling-place in all generati-
cans (m). Mean and old Cloaths will serve us
Fa- (it did them) well enough, while we are as-
hen-ured we are travelling to the Land of Pro-
Agar-mise: the lines are fallen (we shall then say)
cates-into us, in a pleasant place, yea, we have
ord's-a goodly Heritage (n).

Wa- He takes himself here, to have no abiding Ha-
ring-itation, no Treasure, or considerable Interest,
d of- no continuing City. That he is out of his Ele-
ld a-ment, & resting place; a Pilgrim, a Stranger, a
Head-journer, meely wafaring; in passage towards
and- his true home; whither his desires and hopes
g, for- to all tend; where his main concern and se-
better- curity lies, the great object of his affection, love,
ad of- and esteem resides. *And they that say such things,*
s Ta- declare plainly, that they seek a country, that is, an
oath- heavenly. Wherefore, God is not ashamed to be cal-
about- led their God; for he hath prepared for them a City,
d Ho- (x).

An House not made with Hands, eter-
gual in the Heavens; and O how excellent
and glorious! that hath the Omnipotent
with- God, the Founder of it; infinite Wisdom,
is and- and Power to continue and erect it; infinite
many- Treasure and Glory, to enrich, adorn, and
n. 6. 8 beautifie it. As far transcending all earthly
(18) 4- Glory and Happiness, as the curious Frame
11. 37

(m) Ps. 90. 1. (n) Ps. 16. 6. (o) Heb. 11. 14, 16.

of

of Heaven and Earth, excels the clay Cottages made with hands by men.

To the deadness of our Faith, to our Infidelity, and Insincerity, are all our Fears to be imputed. We do not believe in God, his Presence with us, his Providence over us. We are not fully persuaded of his good will unto us, his particular care of us. We do not confide in his help; not rely on his word; we have not respect to the recompence of reward. If you will not believe, surely you shall not be established (p). O precious Faith working by love! that would create a just indifferency and unconcernedness, as to all subliminary things: and fix our minds above, where true undisturbed rest, is only to be found: make us conclude our selves safe at all times, and notwithstanding all hazards. Carry us with insuperable constancy, through all difficulties and dangers: steel us against all perplexing apprehensions: vanquish all slavish fears: prevent all immoderate desires of earthly enjoyments: allay all our Sorrows for their dissolution.

(p) Isa. 7. 9.

(w) Pl. 20. 1. (v) Pl. 10. 6 (v) Heb. 11. 1. 1516.

Encouragement

Against

Evil-Tidings.

Pfal. 112. 7.

He shall not be afraid of Evil-Tidings: His Heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.

IN Times of Trouble and Perplexity, arising through the prospects and prognostics of approaching Miseries; when mens Hearts are failing them for Fear, and for looking after those things that are coming upon them: There's nothing more desirable then inward *Rest and Peace*, which they can never possess, who entertain *Evil-Tidings* with dismaied Minds, and have nothing to trust to, or rest upon, but what may

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Encouragement against

be damaged or taken from them. *Fear of future Trouble* is the great disturber of Humane Life ; molests our quiet hours with dismal apprehensions ; prevents not, nor eases an expected Calamity ; torments us before it comes, more then the Calamity it self ; renders us more unable to bear, and encreases the present Burthen, by adding to it all that possibly we may undergo. 'Tis therefore no inconsiderable part of his Perogative and Happiness, *that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in his Commandments* (a) : That he is of a stable establish'd Spirit, fixed for all Essays, to stand firm, to retain the quiet and serenity of his Soul, notwithstanding all Accurances, and Disasters ; though all about him be in a Combustion : Immutably resolv'd to maintain his Station, notwithstanding all the attempts made to beat him from it ; *Though an Host should encamp against me, my Heart shall not fear ; though War should rise against me, in this will I be confident* (b). Plots, or Invasions, threatning Devastation, Ruin, and general Destruction, move not, nor invade his pious armed Breast, which is proof against all those occasions which unsettle, and transport all others ; they shall leave him as they find him, erect, settled, not to be moved by them. The Tranqui-

(a) Vers. 1. (b) Psal. 119. 3.

lity of his mind he will hold fast, and not let it go, nothing shall disturb him so long as he lives. He laughs at all those foolish Amusements, to which others abandon themselves, and lives as comfortably, notwithstanding all storms and inconveniencies, as others in the most serene undisturbed State. A perpetual natural goodness, is neither diminished nor shaken with any casualty or disappointment: *The Righteous is an everlasting Foundation* (c). He sails along this Tempestuous Sea, where one Wave is perpetually pressing upon the neck of another, with an even, calm, serene Soul: entertains the fiercest Threatning with an unshaken mind: stands unmov'd, when all things are staggering and reeling into disorder and confusion: fearlessly beholds an awaiting danger. Is privileged against the dread of those approaching Storms which affright and alarm all the World, *He shall not be afraid of Evil-Tidings, &c.* For, he settles these things in his Heart, That

(I) *Feared Evils peradventure may not come: or not come nigh him* (d). Impendent Judgments may blow over; be warded off; the Island delivered by the pureness of his Hands (e). God may repent him of the Evil that he had said that do unto it; and not do

(c) Prov. 10. 25. (d) Ps. 91. 7. (e) Job 22. 30.

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it (f). However, *publick Calamities* are never so particular, as to reach every Individual. God always in Judgment remembers Mercy: charges the Destroyer not to come nigh any, on whom is the mark (g). When a Nation is ripe for Ruin, and the Harvest-man gathereth the Corn, and reapeth the Ears, with his Arms, gleaning Grapes shall be left in it, &c. (b). It may be, he shall be in the number of the few that shall be hid in the day of the Lord's Anger, as standing Monuments of Divine Conduct and Safe-guard.

(2) *His main Concern is secured and out of danger.* He is Rich in Faith (k). Rich in good Works (l). Rich towards God (m). His Life is hid with Christ in God (n). Eternal life, supernatural goods, are incorruptible, independent on Fortune, easie to conserve, not liable to spoil, or a violent hand. External Comforts or Crosses make little accession to, or diminution from the satisfaction and serenity of his Spirit. 'Tis better not to need, to be above, then enjoy abundance. All is well, as long as it is well within. When Simeon had Christ in his Arms, and Zachew Christ in his House, how little were they taken with, or concerned for other things?

(f) Jon. 3. 10. (g) Ex. 12. 13. Ez. 9. 6. (b) Isa. 17. 5. (k) Ja. 2. 5. (l) 1 Tim. 6. 18. (m) Luke 12. 21. (n) Col. 3. 3.

His *real wants* he presumes shall be supply'd. God will not forsake us in our honest Endeavours: he hath ways to help, when visible supplies are removed out of the view of sense. And *a little* suffices, if God give no more. His *allowance* is enough for the Service and Honour he expects from us, to sustain us in our Journey to a better Life. It's not *abundance* men need, but *satisfied minds*. Having (bare) Food and Raiment, let us be therewith Content (o). The continuance of that he reckons a great favour, a new engagement (p). For much Wealth, none are nearer Happiness, nor further from the Grave. Ere long, all are turned out of the World, as naked as they came into it; and a little time, should make but a little difference. It's our great Imperfection to dislike the perfect Will of God. Two straight things apply'd together, close all along, that which closeth not with what is straight, must needs be crooked. God is too *just* to do us wrong, too *good* to do us hurt, and too *wise* not to know what will do us good or hurt. Therefore his Children refer all to him, to dispose of them and theirs. They capitulate not with him what they will have, how much only they will suffer; but resolve all into his will and pleasure, be it never so dismal and afflicting (s). 1 Tim. 6. 8. (p) Gen. 28. 20.

(s) 1 Tim. 6. 8. (p) Gen. 28. 20. H 3 active;

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Active: Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death, &c. All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy Covenant (q). 'Tis enough for them that there is a God (r), that still watches over, hath a particular care of them (s), that will not be prodigal of their Lives, and Comforts; but use them to his Glory, and their greatest Honour, Gain, and Satisfaction at the last. That, not an hair of their head can fall without his Providence (t), much less the head it self. That nothing befalls them but in mercy, for their good, (better then if it had been otherwise) which he hath promis'd them in all his dealings towards them, that all shall go well with them, or end well for them. That he will not leave them to insupportable difficulties (v). That (in spite of the malice of men or devils) he will guide them to eternal life (w), and we may well let him take his own method to bring us thither. Such great Spirits as his, welcome, if not long for an opportunity to try their strength, and show their Courage, how they can maintain their joy and satisfaction in God, though destitute, and deprived of all Creature supports and comforts (x).

(q) Psal. 44. 9. &c. (r) Heb. 11. 6. (s) 1 Pet. 5. 7.
 (t) Mat. 10. 30. (v) Psal. 37. 23, 24. 1 Cor. 10. 13. 2 Cor.
 4. 60. (w) Luke 12. 32. (x) Hab. 3. 17, 18. He

He arms himself with the same mind of those worthy Hero's, who are gone before him; the complection and constitution of his Soul we find upon record. It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good (y). The people spake of stoning him, but David encouraged himself in the Lord by God (z). Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken (a). The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord (b). God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble: therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar, and be troubled, &c. (c). They departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name (d). And took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves that they have in heaven a better, and an enduring substance (e). Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines, the labor of the Olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat, the flocks shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, will joy in the God of my salvation (f).

(y) 1 Sam. 3. 18. (z) 1 Sam. 30. 6. (a) 2 Kin. 22. 19. (b) Job 1. 21. (c) Psal. 46. 1, &c. (d) Acts 5. 41. (e) Heb. 10. 34. (f) Hab. 3. 18.

(3) *The great Sovereign of Heaven and Earth governs the World.* There are no wild accidents of Fortune. Things are not left to the Wills of men, to blind Chance, to their own Contingency: but are all inspected, guided, and ordered by *him* with good Advice. However things go or varie, *he* is still the same, and will order all things well. No snares, intrigues, or difficulties puzzle, or prevent the ways and purposes of God. Whatsoever Contrivances, and Confusions be amongst men, he still keeps his Throne; manages his regal Office; never lets loose the Reins of his Government of the World, though the Instruments of his over-ruling Power may be guilty of Violence and Injustice. *If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter; for he that is higher then the highest, regardeth, and there be higher then they* (g). The Tragical Rents and Revolutions of States and Kingdoms; the Fate of *Cæsar*, and *Pampey*; the disappointment of Councils; the conservation of the *Capitol*; the defeats of Armies flesht with long success; the disrobing of Majesty; the pulling asunder the Thrones of mighty Empires; the numerous Accidents and Traverses of humane Life; all Transactions publick and private,

(g) Eccles. 5. 8.

de-

depend upon the disposing will and pleasure of God. He over-rules all Consultations, Affairs, Designs, and Endeavours, concerning Kingdoms and Communities, in infinite Wisdom, as is most conducing to the holy and just ends of the Divine Government, and good of his People. Can and will, as he sees best, blast and disappoint the most politick Devices, and Machinations, infatuate the prudentest Councils, defeat the formidablest Army or Armada, and make the Earth help the Woman (b), bring about his own glorious designs, by what seemed most to oppose it; suffer no more ambitious rage, spite, and Cruelty, then shall conduce to it; *Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee, the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain (i).* He stilleth the noise of the Seas, the noise of their Waves, and the tumult of the people (k), tho' they seem as ungovernable as the vast Ocean. *Saying, hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther; and here shall thy proud waves be staid (l).* If he be so punctual and exact, as to weigh the Winds, and measure the Waters in dispensing them (m): much more in ordering the Governments, States, and Affairs of the World. *He ruleth by his power for ever, his eyes behold the nations; let not the rebellious*

(b) Rev. 12. 16. (i) Psal. 76. 10. (k) Psal. 65. 7.
(l) Job 36. 11. (m) Job 28. 25.

exalt themselves (n). 'Tis very unfuitable to the Spirit and Power of Religion, to give up all for lost, when second causes fail, as to divine ability and fidelity, for the accomplishing and effecting of what concerns himself and us; the Glory of his Name and Kingdom, and our Good, as subordinate and related thereunto. And no good man can look for any thing, to the dishonour of his God, and to the real prejudice of God's great Concern and Kingdom. Be sure, his Interest shall prosper more or less, and all attempts to undermine it be defeated. The *Philistins* conquered *Israel*, but the *Ark* conquered the *Philistins*. He will have a *Church* in the World, and an *Altar* in it. The *Tabernacle* may have its remove, but shall never be destroy'd, till folded up in his *Sanctuary*. We may composedly leave *that* to himself, which he hath so nearly espoused, laid so near his own heart. He will disperse the black Cloud that it fall not in a Storm; or bring light out of darkness, order out of confusion, good out of other's thoughts and designs of evils (o). The *Removal*, hath been the *spreading* of the *Gospel*; the Blood of *Martyrs* the Seed of the Church; proselyted its *Persecutors*, who have leaped out of *Infidelity*, into *Martyrdom*. Did we see God at

(n) Psal. 66. 7.

(o) Gen. 50. 20.

the end of Causes, we could no more mur-
mur at his Providence, then we can against
his Creation. Shall we prescribe Rules to that
Sovereign, how to act, that are unable to
prescribe our own Remedy? We may well
trust him to rule the World, who hath done it
nigh Six Thousand Years, without commit-
ting one Error or over-sight. Rejoicing that
he hath an unquestionable Superintendency
over all the Beings, Motions, and Actions of
his Creatures. *Saying among the Heathen, that
the Lord reigneth, let the world rejoice, also the
multitude of the Isles (which are most subject
to Tempests, Inundations, changes in the Air
and State) be glad thereof.* Be they ne-
ver so much in danger, by reason of their in-
solent (in appearance) prosperous Enemies:
though their Advantages be great, their Con-
vivances sabbell, their Designs cruel, their En-
deavours vigorous; though every one seem
to be for them, and against his Servants:
though all look black: and thick about them;
and nothing visible, but Bones exceeding
dry, and scattered in the Valley; though
Moloch himself projects and contrives, and
Achishophel join in Counsel with him: though
Sennacherib provides a formidable Host; and
Rabshakeb confidently taunt: though the Pit
be deep, and the Execution sudden: yet

(p) Psal. 96. 10. *and 22. 1. (1) 2 Chr. 19. 2. (2) 1 Chr. 19. 2.*

Train laid, the Match lighted, the Obstacle removed: though the horse be prepared to the battel; and the Lot cast into the Lap, the end and disposal of all is of the Lord (q). *He that is our God, is the God of salvation* (which is often the last stroke upon David's Harp) *and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death* (r). *Rejoice in the Lord* (s).

(4) *The Foundation of his Rest is firm, and immovable.* He reposes his Soul upon the Rock of Ages. Having done every thing he can, or is obliged to do by his duty, he sits down under his shadow with great delight, and waits the success in Faith, and Hope; with perfect resignation to his wise and just appointment in all things, who hath a particular care of those that place their trust, affiance, and acquiescence of mind in him; that support themselves against all fears, upon account of his All-sufficiency; that he takes notice of their condition, is able to, and will order all for the best: that nothing befalls them without his knowledge; his allowance of it, his being concerned for it. *For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro, throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them, whose heart is perfect towards him* (t). All his Saints are in his hand (t). He will

(q) Prov. 16. 33. and 21. 31. (r) Psal. 68. 20.

2 Chr. 16. 9. (s) Deut. 33. 3.

keep the feet of his Saints (v). He with-
draweth not his eye from the righteous (w).
He hath as it were pickt and cull'd them out
of the rest of the World, for his special
Friends and Favourites: *The Lord hath set a-
part him that is godly for himself (x)*, and will
reasonably interpose for their succour in their
greatest exigences: *In the mount of the Lord,
it shall be seen (y)*. To preserve them amidst
all dangers and difficulties: *When thou pas-
sest through the Waters, I will be with thee; and
through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee;
and when thou walkest through the fire, thou
shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle
upon thee (z)*. None of them that trust in him
(that lean upon him, that refer themselves to
him) shall be desolate (a). But shall be as mount
Sion, which cannot be removed; but abideth for
ever. *As the mountains are round about Jerusalem,
so the Lord is round about his people, from hence-
forth, even for ever.* If the Bride-groom can-
not cast off, neglect, disregard his beloved
Spouse; nor the tender Father, his dear
Children; nor a man of Understanding, his
Portion, his Jewels, his Friends, the beloved
of his Soul; nor willingly expose the ten-
derest part about him, *the Apple of his Eye*, to

(v) 1 Sam. 2. 9. (w) Job (x) Psal. 4. 3. (y) Gen. 22. 14.
(z) Isa. 43. 2. (a) Psal. 34. 22. and 125. 1, 2.

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ger; God must always exercise a special Care for his people. *The name of the Lord is a strong Tower, the righteous runneth into it and is safe (b).* They that be with us (two men only) are more then they that be with them (c). The whole Militia of Heaven is on their side (d), and he that keepeth Israel, who neither slumbers nor sleeps (e). And therefore when a Storm is towards, he familiarly invites them in, for shelter: quietly to repose themselves in his protecting Providence; excluding all diffident thoughts: As twere takes them by the hand, and conducts them into a place of safety, *Come my people, enter thou into thy Chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thy self as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be over-past (f).* Where they shall be out of reach; as safe and secure, as in an impregnable well provided Fort, or place of Defence, and not fail of all Needfuls provided for them, *He shall dwell on high; his place of defence shall be the munition of rocks; bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure (g).* They who continually make God their defence, that trust to his protection; rely and cast themselves upon him for safety, shall find him a sure safe-guard: they are his par-

(b) Prov. 18. 10. (c) 2 Kings 6. 16. (d) Psal. 34.
 Heb. 1. 14. (e) Psal. 121. 4. (f) Isa. 26. 3. (g) Psal. 33. 16. and 65. 13, 14.

ticular Care and Charge, under his special Providence and Defence, secure from all hurt and danger: *He that dwelleth in the secret places of the most high, shall abide under the shadow of the almighty. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust (b)*: An allusion to Fowls who hover over their young, running under, committing themselves to the defence of their *Wings* for safety, when danger threatens them; and they that would be safe under God's, must not only please themselves with the general notion, that safety and protection is *there* to be had; but make their refuge *there*; put themselves under the shadow of those *Wings*, by their special Act and Deed: deliberately chuse, and effectually place their last resort *there*. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most high, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, &c. (i). This gracious special protection over them in times of danger, is called, *hiding them in his pavilion*; in the secret of his presence; in the secret of his tabernacle (k), being their shield and buckler (l), their rock and refuge; an high tower, a resting-place, a shelter, a sanctuary unto them (m), a secret inviolable place of Retreat and Refuge,

(b) Psal. 94. 1, 4. (i) Psal. 91. 9, 10. (k) Psal. 27. 5. and 31. 20. (l) Psal. 91. 4. (m) Isa. 8. 14. Ez. 11. 16.

whereunto they may freely resort, and wherein they may safely, and quietly repose themselves) setting them upon a rock (n), making an hedge about them (o), covering them in the shadow of his hand (p), suffering not their feet to be moved; being their keeper, their shadow; at their right hand, the rock of their salvation (q). Whatsoever, by tender Affection, Art, or Nature, can be a security, he is, and much more, to those that commit themselves to him for it. He loves us better than we love our selves; and better knows what is fit for our great Interest, our universal welfare; which is lodged more intimately in his heart, then it can be in ours, and which he hath engaged to prosecute. None of his faithful Servants can be produced, as an instance of Divine forgetfulness or neglect; whose just expectation he ever exposed to reproach. He so contrives, dispenses, orders all things, as his upright ones shall applaud his Faithfulness, Clemency, and Love at last: and find, *there hath not fail'd one word of all his good promises which he promised* (r); and that their complaints of *divine dereliction*, were repugnant to his *paternal Bowels and Relations* (s).

(n) Psal. 27. 5. (o) Job 1. 10. (p) Isa. 51. 16.
 (q) Psal. 66. 9. and 16. 8. and 121. 5. and 95. 1. (r)
 1 Kin. 8. 36. (s) Isa. 49. 14, 16.

(5) *His Sovereign is not worse then his Word,*
if he cut short his Natural, and give him Eternal
Life: consume his Cottage, and take him to his
own Palace. After all our difficult intricate
 passages through this Wilderness, we shall find
 them the right way to a city of habitation (t),
 that hath foundations (v) which others want to
 stand upon; and shall stand, when Heaven and
 Earth shall give their dying groan, crack a-
 sunder, become their own funeral pile: And,
 shall the Garrison yield, when Relief is at hand?
 The Merchant give up his Hope, within sight
 of Harbour? The Husbandman hang down
 his Head, when he sees the Field even white
 for Harvest? With what Joy, rather then
 Patience, would he go through all his Cost
 and Pains, were he sure every Corn would
 bear a Crown? Cast not away therefore your
 confidence, which hath great recompence of reward
 (w), where no dismal Apprehensions, unde-
 lightful Prospects, or Aspects ever had place,
 There the black Regiment of Errors, Igno-
 rance, and obscure Apprehensions, shall be
 disbanded. The Clouds upon our minds va-
 nish, as the darkness of the Night is routed
 by the rising Sun. Those groundless scru-
 ples, which gravel tender hearts; and what-
 ever offends, shall be gathered out of this

(t) Psal. 107. 7. (v) Heb. 11. 10. (w) Heb. 10.

14 & 15 M. (x)

king.

kingdom (x). Those laborious Controversies, wrangling Contentions, polemical Disputations, which fling this World into Estuations, have a final determination: and all subtil Distinctions, Equivocations, Evasions, swept away as a Refuge of Lies. There the meanest Understanding, shall confute the Maxims of a whole *Sanbedrim* of *Rabbies*: and look down upon all the grandure of humane Policies and Reasons of State, with as scornful an eye, as we now look up with, to the meanest Cob-web in our Windows. There all unruly Passions, impetuous Motions, and mutinous Commotions of Spirit, which de-thron'd Judgment and Conscience in our Breast, are cashier'd, subdued, reduced to a Calm, eternally extinguished; and our hearts have a total, a final Circumcision, when this eighth day, and great Sabbath of the Saints is come. There the whole Body of bodily Distempers, Infirmities, whatsoever clogs us with Indispositions; or makes us heavy hearted, and dull spirited in holy Duties shall be shaken off, and pass away. We shall serve God then, without any lassitude, fainting, or tediousness; and rejoyce as a Giant to run our Race. Our Wills then, shall perfectly fall in with the Divine Will: and nothing seem *good* to us, but what is so in God.

(x) Mat. 13. 41.

esteem

esteem. All that Legion of foul Spirits, with their Armory of Temptations, shall be confin'd for ever in their Chains of Darknes: the Prince of this World finally deposed, the Scene of his Temptations then ended; and he no more able to fasten a Temptation on a Saint in Glory, then a man can now shoot an Arrow into the heart of the Sun. The *ground*, that now *lords it* over men, is the Lordship, not the Man; that plows up his heart with careful Solitudes; casting its furrows, and wrinkles in his face; shall never give thorns, and thistles to his eyes more; but he shall be able to serve God, without any Vellications, Convulsions, Cramps, or Distractions, from the sour fermentations of the Flesh and World. Saints have *there* on their Royal Apparel: every infant Grace, hath its adolescence into a perfect man, and to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. *Here*, like poor Common Souldiers, some get one piece of Armour, others another; one is skill'd at this Weapon, another at that; *Job* gets an *Helmet of Patience*, *David* a *Girdle of Truth*, *Moses* a *Breast-plate of Meekness*, *St. Peter* a *Shield of Faith*; after they had been train'd up to the use of them in many Combats: but *there* every one hath put upon him the *whole Armour of Light*, not to fight, but triumph in; with *Palms in their hands*, absolute Peace, com-

compleat Victory; a Crown incorruptible, that fadeth not away. There's no Worm in the fruit of that Paradise: no reflection upon sin or sorrow past with bitterness of Spirit; as now we have in our greatest Triumphs and Festivities, as the *Jews* in their Feasts of Tabernacles had their *Willows* among their *Palms*, while they remembered the dangers they passed in the Wilderness on their Festival Revolutions: but (every review (if actual felicity can possibly give way to it) will only widen, and dilate the Soul for a more ample fruition of the present state. We shall *there* have an everlasting Avocation from unchristian Agitations, Wars, and Contentions of this present World. *Mesech*, and *Tubal*, with all their uncircumcised multitude, are gon^down to Hell; and they have laid their *Swords* under their Heads; but their Iniquities shall be upon their Bones: though they were the Terror of the Mighty in the Land of the Living, they shall be unable to amove a very Worm from feeding upon them. The most Valiant Attempts of high famed Mortals; and all the Arms, Ensigns, Patents, Titles (for we pronounce them too long) of Honour, shall be blazon'd alike in a Field Ardent, when the Heavens shall roul and shrivel up as a Scrole of Parchment before the Flame. When *Beauty*, that blossom of

Flesh

Flesh and Blood, which now carries so many Captives at her Wheels; tyrannizing over fond Mortal Affections, would be *there* no more comely then a dry Skull, in comparison of the ravishing Lustre that will be in the most deformed Body of the poorest *Lazarillo*; whose brightness will transcend the loveliest face more, then the rarest Jewel doth a vile piece of Jet. *When* all the pure Gold in the World shall be melted out of the Veins of the Earth, and mens Coffers, into one common stream: and all Pearls and pretious Stones, lie as the Gravel on the side of that River, yet a silly Emblem, scarcely thought fit then to make a Metaphor of, for the very *pavement* of the *new Jerusalem*; one sight whereof shall dim and deface all the Glory of the World. When we shall understand all the unintelligible dispensations of Providence, which now puzzle and amuse us: *why that grand Cheat and Impostor* should so long delude, obtain, and prosper; where *the Lord of Glory*, and *his faithful Ambassadors* were crucified and slain: and the Sun of Righteousness lie so long under an Eclipse by Paganism and Idolatry. *Why a Church* so mischievous to her unfortunate Members; stained and polluted with Blood and Blasphemy; should have her Principles so greedily entertain'd; not by Vulgar only, but Capitals in Learning;

Learning; and be the Shambles of butcherly Cruelty to so many of Christ's Sheep. *Why* so many thousands sacrific'd to the ambition of one proud Mortal; horrid Wickedness wanton it in Power, Grandure, and Success, over Equity, Innocence, and Virtue, scorn'd, oppress'd, and vilified upon this Stage of Grief and Misery. *When* all knots shall be fully untied; all mysteries unvail'd, all intricacies of providence unravelled; the just connexion of the least link in that great Chain, easily seen, in that Land of Vision, where all is clear, yet all amazing; and the unequal reflections made here, as if Justice slept, Divine Wisdom were careless, or put to a baffle, turned to admiring acknowledgments of that Care and Goodness that runs through all the Winds of Providence. *When* we shall see of all Parties, of one Mind and Judgment, and hear all speak the same thing: when one Heaven shall be the proper Country of all its Inhabitants; and its Language equally understood by all, though redeemed from several Nations, and Kindred, and People, and Tongues. *When* we shall enjoy the happy Society of Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, (whose imaginary Reliques some go a weary Pilgrimage to see) with the Blessed Quire of Ministering Spirits, who have done us while we were in danger here, many an invisible

Cour-

erly Courtesy, which we could never thank them
Why for: yea, our Christian Friends and Relations,
 ion to whom we have been instrumental in
 ness their new Birth, all crown'd in one day,
 uc- with an everlasting Diadem of Bliss, which
 ue, never shall decay. *Where* there shall be no
 age Hypocrite to lose our love upon; which is
 shall now the great cooler of our Charity, and
 all keeps our Affections in a greater Reserve.
 iust *When* triumphant Souls, shall see, admire,
 in, and celebrate that infinite Wildom and
 ere Goodness, in those things they were too apt
 ne- to complain of, and under, here; how neces-
 pt, sary, useful for bringing them *thither*. And
 o a Oh! how will the Arches of Heaven eccho,
 nts when Saints and Angels shall join in one com-
 gh mon Quire, and heavenly Chorus, with their
 shall high sounding Symbals; when they shall be
 nt, joyful in Glory; and sing aloud upon their
 ne everlasting Beds of Rest, in most flourishing
 its expressions, and Anthems upon the Divine
 in- Blessedness, and Glory.

Psal. 150. 5. and 149. 5.

Our Evidence clear, our Promises true,
 ted, our Promises true, our Promises true,
 hand; that we may be able to honour our
 Principles, to stand upright then with un-
 daunted minds; to comfort our loves, and
 encourage others, to praise for God, to praise
 for God, to praise for God, to praise for God.

Encouragement

Against the

Fear of Death.

I Cor. 15. 55.

O death, where is thy sting? &c.

OUR *whole Lives* are little enough to lay up for our *last hour*, to make ready for the coming of our Lord, that we may be found of him in peace (a), not only safe, but comfortable. Our Evidences clear, our Faith well exercised, our Promises ready, our Experiences at hand; that we may be able to honour our Principles, to stand upright then with undaunted minds; to comfort our selves, and encourage others, to plead for God, to speak

(a) 1 Pet. 3. 14.

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to the standers-by, of the long proof we have had of his being a good Master, a gracious Father to us ; to commend the Mercifulness, Love, and Faithfulness of our Redeemer (*b*). *Faith* is wrought by degrees to strength and perfection: to have it *to get*, when we should reduce it *to practice*, or, to put it to the hardest Tryal at first, is absurd and irrational. We now find it harder to depend upon God for our *daily Bread*, then for *eternal Life* ; for, here our Faith is put upon a present Trial ; but at Death, the strength of our Confidence is tried about the blessed Recompences ; whether we can put our Souls into God's keeping ; and send our Bodies to the Grave in hope. We need Armour of proof indeed for *that* great Conflict, to deal with the last Enemy, which tames the proudest Mortals, and astonishes the daring confident World, who are then dismay'd with guilt, and enfeebled with the hand-writing in their own Breasts. The Valiantest Conquerours, who with their sanguin Flags strook terror into all Nations, were affrighted themselves at the displaying of the pale and wan Colours of Death : while those that could not look upon the violent Instruments of it in the hand of an Enemy, or encounter an Adversary abroad, have entertain'd the *King of Terrors*

(*b*) Jos. 23. st. 4. 2 Tim. 1. 12. and 4. 8.

with great composure and sedateness of spirit ; notwithstanding all that Terror cruel men have cloathed it with.

As *Profaneness* hath not the advantage of Religion, in giving Protection against the Fear of Death, so it hath greatly the disadvantage in affording no relief. Sinners *suffer Death*, their *Souls* are *required* of them (c), torn from them by violent hands : while *good mens* are not so much *taken from them*, as *yielded up*. Though they have *Life in patience*, they have *Death in desire* ; not to avoid the Labours and Duties of their Calling ; not out of impatience, distrust of God's Providence, discontent with our Condition, or weariness of Life ; that because we see Labour and Sorrow in the World, are for staying no longer in it (d) : this argues Pride, Peevishness, Cowardliness, Sluggishness of Spirit, that we have a fancy for Heaven, only as a place of Retreat : but out of ardent Love to God and our Redeemer, with submission to his Will, to be with him, free from Sin and temptation to it. To serve God here, is our great Wisdom, and Interest ; to die when he pleases, God's great Mercy. *I have not so lov'd* (saith St Ambrose) *that I am ashamed to live longer ; nor yet fear I Death, because I*

(c) Luke 12. 20. (d) Kings 19. 4. Job. 3. Jer. 20. 14, &c.

have a good Lord. 'Tis no harsh news, but welcome and desirable to them to hear of their *departure* (e). With all alacrity they loose from the Shoar, and hoise up Sail for their own Country, where they may quietly enjoy the gain of their Adventure. 'Twere endless to instance how familiarly they have entertain'd Death, welcom'd it as their best Friend, caressed, courted, embraced the Instruments of it; how sweetly they have Sung their Swan-like Song (f), and given their last fare-well: How many Tyrants have been: more unable to invent cruel Deaths, then they to undergo them? In what a triumphant manner they have marched out of the Field of this World with (as 'twere Colours flying, Drums beating) all imaginable instances of joy and gladness; insulking over Death, as more then Conquerours (g), trampling upon it, lying as it were at their mercy; offering Sacrifice for Victory over that Universal Monarch; having an Entrance ministred unto them abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (h), taking up in a holy bravery that triumphant Song with the Apostle (i), O

(e) Phil. 1. 23. (f) Luke 2. 29. (g) Rom. 8. 37.
(h) 2 Pet. 2. 11. (i) 1 Cor. 15. 55. A double Metaphor, the one taken from a Bee or Serpent, that hath lost their Sting; the other from a Conquerour, that hath lost his Booty, or Prisoner.

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death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? The sting, the wounding power of Death, the only thing that makes it terrible is sin, which renders us obnoxious to the Curse. The strength of sin, which gives it power to hurt us, is, the Law that prohibits it. Death brings nothing with it to injure us, but what it finds in us, the desert of it (k); but for guilt, it differs nothing from a calm Sleep. The Victory of the Grave is to be seen in Macpelah, Golgotha, Charnel-houses, Cæmiteries, Shrines, Tombs, Sepulchres, in all that ever Death Arrested, or had in Custody: But thanks be to God who hath given us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ: he hath taken away the sting of Death (put away sin) by the Sacrifice of himself (l), overcome the pains of Death by his Example and Promises (m), wiped away the scandal of Death, by enduring the shameful Death of the Cross (n), vanquish'd the power of Death, by his Resurrection as our Surety, the Mediator of our Peace, who having laid down a sufficient price; a publick Officer from Heaven is sent to open the Prison door (o). Thereby proclaiming to all the World, that the debt was paid; that God had received full satisfaction for

(k) Rom. 6. 23. (l) Heb. 9. 26. (m) Psal. 23. 4. Isa. 53. 7. Heb. 2. 10. 1 Pct. 4. 1. (n) Heb. 12. 2. 3. (o) Mat. 28. 2.

our sins, saying, *Deliver him, for I have found a ransom (p)*. Yea, He rose as the publick Head and Representative of all his People (who share in his Victories) as a pledge and part of the whole Harvest; *is become the first fruits of them that sleep (q)*; the exemplary Pattern, Assurance, and will be the Cause of their Resurrection. When Christ arose, he virtually drew all his out of the Grave with him: Death it self became Mortal. The Head is not compleat (nor will be long) without the Members, who being so, cannot perish, *because I live, you shall live also (r)*.

To be fearful then, and dejected at the approach of Death, is a diffidence of his Redemption, who hath in our nature and stead satisfied every demand of the broken Law; by his voluntary and meritorious obedience, and sufferings, answered the exaction, and endured the malediction of it; so mercifully provided against both the hurt and dread of Death: Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through Death, he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil. And deliver them who through the fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage (s). Death now is ours, for

(p) Job 33. 24. (q) 1 Cor. 15. 20. (r) John 14. 19
(s) Heb. 2. 14. 15.

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our Advantage, contributory, subservient to our Happiness; put into the Inventory of our *Priviledges*, which accrue to us by Christ (t). He hath sanctified, sweetned, purchased it for us as properly as *Life*: *changed its Nature*, of an *Enemy*, made it our real reconciled *Friend*, turned its horror and deformity; its frightful gasty Countenance, out of dislike, into a pleasing aspect. Is no longer a grim *Sergeant* to Arrest us as his Prisoner, whose Debts are paid, whose Pardon is granted, whose Prince's favour is obtain'd; but an officious *Servant*, comes to open the Prison door, to set us at liberty; to hold back the hanging of our House of Clay, while our Spirit enters into the Presence-Chamber of the great King: waits on us till we have finished our work, then undresses, puts us (his Children) to Bed for a time, until Corruption put on Incorruption, and Mortality be swallowed up of Life. It cannot be evil to those, to whom *all things work together for good* (v). Death hath lost its sting in the side of Christ, who by taking away our guilt, hath taken away the poison out of that Cup (w). The bitterness of death is past, embalmed to Believers; cloathed with such soft Language, that they may (as twere)

(t) 1 Cor. 3. 22. (v) Rom. 1. 28. (w) Mat. 26.

scent a perfume, discover a beauty in it; represented under the comfortable notions of a *Decease* (x), a *departure* (y), an *absence from the body*, a *going home*, an *uncloathing this earthly tabernacle* (z), an *entering into peace*, a *resting in their beds* (a). Sickness rocks the Cradle, and Death lays them asleep in the Dust, as in a sacred Dormitory after a toilsom Pilgrimage. Is nothing else but a Writ of Ease to Christ's weary Servants; a perfect Sanctuary, where no disturbances, no avenger of Blood can arrest or molest us. This earthly House is pulled down only in order to raising it a more glorious Building; the immortal Inhabitant makes his escape, neither crush'd with its ruin, nor injur'd with its fall. The *Soul and Body* part only as two Friends at the Church-door, when going each to his Seat till Sermon's ended, and then both meet again much the better. Their Death, their Dust is precious; in Christ's special Care and Custody; as precious Reliques never to be lost, Expectants in a silent, but assured hopes of a joyful Resurrection. He preserves his Interest in them; his Relation to them, is the same still (b). Death cuts the natural tye between Parents and Children, Man and

(x) 2 Pet. 1. 13. (y) 2 Tim. 4. 6. (z) 2 Cor. 5. 1, &c. 2 Pet. 1. 14. (a) Isa. 57. 2. (b) Mat. 22. 31, 32.

Wife, Body and Soul, but not the mystical Union between Head and Members; no more then Sleep doth that between Soul and Body; which chains up the Senses for a time, *even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him (c)*. Death perfects the mystical Union, in respect of the Body, doth not so much separate our Souls from our Bodies, as join them to Christ; nor so much end our Life, as our Mortality. The sleep of the Spouse breaks not the Marriage-knot between her and the Bridegroom (*d*). There's somewhat of (a Member of) Christ that lies in the Grave, of no less account with him, then those which walk up and down glorifying him in the World.

We may now well look up, and lift up our heads, for our Redemption draweth nigh (*e*). How beautiful are thy Feet O Death, which bring glad Tidings of great Joy; that our Wilderness-days are ended, our Military hardships accomplished, our sinning and suffering expired. We shall no more offend a good God, nor be offended by bad men. There's no Serpent in that Paradise, no ill Neighbour, no breakings forth, no leading into Captivity, no complaining in the streets of the new *Jerusalem*. O happy change, I

(c) 1 Thes. 4. 14. (d) Rom. 8. 38, 39. (e) Luke 21. 28.

have so long waited for, expected, and desired; Earth for Heaven; a bloody Field, a continual Combat, for a place of Triumph, a Crown of Righteousness; the House of my Pilgrimage and Banishment, for my own Country, my Father's House; a Valley of Tears (where we cannot long keep dry eyes), for a place where all are wiped away; Labour and Toil, Corruption and Mortality, for Rest and Peace, Incorruption and Immortality; subjection to a sinning condition, for an impossibility of sinning; unsatisfying fading Comforts, an Estate of Need and continual Want, for endless Pleasures, Fulness and all Plenty; inferiour disturbing, unholy Company, for Saints, Angels, Royal Priests, Crowned Kings; from all Perplexities and Uneasinesses, into the bosom of a sweet and quiet Repose. And, what oppressed Prisoner desires not freedom? What weather-beaten Traveller longs not for the Port? What Heir is unwilling to enter upon his Inheritance? What Labouring man is afraid of a sweet Sleep? What loving Spouse dreads the Marriage Day? or Prince, his Coronation? Who thinks much to put off his Cloaths, that they may be mended and made better against the Morning? Who is troubled when his sick Friend is laid down to Rest? Who takes on, when any of the Family is gone to

Bed before him in the Evening? Who grieves to bid others good night? or to pass sooner to be rich, or honourable, or at endless quiet? to escape those Storms others are fain to ride thorough? to take possession of his own blessedness and glory? the worst thing thou canst do to us, is the best thing that can be done for us. Thou housest us from every Storm, in the silent Grave, made fragrant ever since the Rose of *Sharon*, the Lilly of the Valleys lay in it. Thou art the great *Panacea*, Salve for all our Maladies and Distempers; for which we in vain here complain from man to man, for a little ease, though but for a little time. That *Infallible Physician*, that cures us of all Diseases at once, and for ever; that frees us from all *Calamities*, Publick, National, or Personal; the Grave is the only piece of quiet earth man can meet with: *There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest; there the prisoners rest together, they hear not the voice of the oppressor; the small and the great are there, and the servant is free from his master (f).* Every score shall be now blotted out; every debt cancell'd; we as fully, as freely acquitted and discharged; every *Canaanite* slain, every *Egyptian* drown'd; those Corruptions we have seen to day, we shall see them again no more, for ever.

(f) Job 3. 19. &c.

the Fear of Death.

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I shall no more question his love, or fear of my everlasting rest. I shall now reap the fruit of all my hopes, and possess Glory above the life of Faith, I had before only in the promise in the first-fruits: every grace of the Spirit, is a spark of our future Glory, and every comfort of it, a drop of the Well of Life. Now is that Clay crumbling into Dust, which hindred my getting into the embraces of infinite love and sweetness. Now the day is come, ~~the~~ hour draws nigh into the embraces of infinite love and sweetness. Now the day is come, the hour draws nigh indeed, wherein I shall be fetched home to my Father's house: he loves me too well, to suffer me longer from possessing that happy Inheritance I have gloried in; *whither the forerunner is [for us] entered (g).* We have one that will be heard, and certainly prevail; our Cause will stand and prosper in his hand; we may now plead as general issue against any exception, the great Charter of the Gospel; and we may instance in this great Title of Grace, the state of Justification, the state of Adoption, the principle of Regeneration and Sanctification, all which we acknowledge we received from Christ, depending upon him, and they are sufficient for all our failings and imperfections.

(g) Heb. 6. 20.

Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit (b), I am thine, save me (i). When I lay in my blood (that was a time of love) thou saidst unto me, Live. Thou drewest me to consent to thy gracious Covenant, and thou swarest unto me, and I became thine (k). I stand to the Covenant that I made (though in much weakness) and would not change my Lord and Master for all the World. Thou wilt know and own, and receive *thine own*, that have owned thee, though I have sinned against thee. I fly unto, and lay hold on thy gracious promise, of which thou hast bid me put thee in remembrance, *I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sin (l).* I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more (m).

What an unspeakable Encouragement is our relation unto thee? (O infinite condescending Mercy!) Thou wilt not shut out *thine own*; thou callest, esteemeth us *thy Children (n), thy Friends (o), thy Spouse, thy Members (p).* The compassion thou hast put into man; engages him to relieve a Neighbour, a Stranger, an Enemy; much more, to em-

(b) Luke 23. 46. (i) Psal. 119. 94. (k) Ez. 16. 8.
 (l) Isa. 43. 25, 26. (n) Jer. 31. 34. (o) 2 Cor. 6.
 17, 18. (p) Ephes. 5. 29.
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brace a Friend; to entertain, to take in a Child, a Spouse, to be tender of part of himself: these dare trust themselves upon our kindness and fidelity, and fear not that we will reject them in their distress, or destroy them though they sometimes offend us. Our Love deserves not the Name, is Cruelty and Hatred, in comparison of the Love of God, who is Love it self (q), and the God of Love (r).

The great Work was done in the day of our Renovation; we were then entred into the House-hold of God; made fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and received the Spirit of Adoption (s). Grace gives us the heavenly Birth and Nature; makes us Heirs; gives us Title, we shall now therefore have possession of an Inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for us (t).

He that hath given Grace, will give Glory, and with-hold no good thing. He gave me Life Eternal, when he gave me the knowledge of himself, and of his Son (v). Thou wilt not now take from me the Kingdom which thou gavest me, when thou receivedst me (once thy Enemy) into favour (w). But God commendeth his love towards us

(q) 1 John 4. 8, 16. (r) 2 Cor. 13. 11. (s) Ep. 2. 19. Gal. 4. 6. (t) 1 Pet. 1. 4. (v) John 17. 3. (w) Heb. 12. 28.

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in that, while we were yet sinners Christ dyed for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God, through the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life (x).

The great impediments and causes of Fear are now removed. Unpardoned sin is taken away ; our Debt discharged. We have a sufficient answer against all that can be alledged to the prejudice of our Souls. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect ? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth ? It is Christ that dyed ; yea, rather that he is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us (y).

Thou wilt not deprive me of the Birth-right, who hath begotten me of the incorruptible Seed. Thou wouldst not have drawn me to thy self, received me by reconciling Grace, if thou wouldst not now have received me unto thy self. Thou hast sealed me up unto Salvation, and given me the earnest of the Spirit, the witness in my self, that renewed Nature, those holy Desires and Delights, which can come from none but thee. Behold Lord thy Mark, thy Seal, thine Earnest ; Flesh and Blood did not illuminate
(x) Rom. 5. 8, &c. (y) Rom. 8. 33.

and

and renew me: the Spirit which thou hast given me, is my witness that I am thine (z). Thou wilt not disown or refuse the Soul that thou hast sealed; not keep me out, whom thou didst invite, and put upon the Wedding-garment. Thy self redeemed, renewed, hath hitherto preserved me; I had not come unto thee, except thou hadst drawn me (a). I had not loved, not minded, not desired after thee, if thou hadst not loved me first, and kindled those desires. It cannot be that thy Grace it self should be a deceit and misery, and intended but to deceive me: that thou shouldest set thy Servant's Soul on longing for that which thou wilt never give him: the Water that thou hast given me shall spring up to everlasting Life (b).

Thou who hast engaged me to seek first thy Kingdom, art engaged to give it: not to deny that Food that endureth to everlasting Life, to those that seek for that which perisheth not (c). Although my sins deserve thy Wrath, and nothing that I have done, deserves thy favour, yet *godliness hath the promise of the life that is to come* (d). He that seeketh by thy help and encouragement, shall find (e). It cannot be that any should be

(z) Rom. 8. 16. (a) John 6. 44. (b) John 4. 14.
(c) John 6. 27. (d) 1 Tim. 4. 8. (e) Mat. 7. 7. *Alas*

disappointed that trust upon thee ; or have cause to repent of serving of thee ; their labour shall not be in vain (f). Thou that hast saved me from Sin, and Satan, wilt save me from Hell. *If any man serve me, let him follow me, and where I am, there shall also my Servant be* (g). Thou wilt crown thine own Graces ; and with thy greatest Mercies, recompence and perfect the preparatory Mercies ; and receive to thy Glory, those, who have been guided by thy Counsel (h).

Although I have forfeited my future Inheritance, and rendred my self liable to thy Wrath ; thou hast appointed and accepted our Redemption (i). *Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other* (k). By our Goel, our Redeemer, of kin unto us, the excellency of his Person, and merit of his Satisfaction and Redemption, so full and compleat to answer the demands of thy Justice : in him thou art reconciled and well pleased.

I fall into his hands who hath justified me by his Blood. My Justifier will not condemn me : nor deny me the Inheritance of which himself hath made me Heir ; yea, a Joint-Heir with himself (l). *Lord Jesus re-*

(f) 1 Cor. 15. 58. (g) John 12. 26. (h) Psal. 73. 24.
(i) 1 Cor. 1. 30. (k) Psal. 85. 10. (l) Rom. 8. 17.

ceive my spirit (m), for thou hast redeemed it (n). To whom can a departing Soul fly for refuge and entertainment, if not to thee that dyed for Souls; and suffered thine to be separated from the flesh, that we might have all assurance of thy compassion unto ours? I come not unto an Enemy, but unto him that hath so dearly loved me, and bought me: And can Love it self reject me, that hath given himself for me? so often embraced me? declared it self by such ample testimonies towards me?

'Twas thy Errand into the World to save us from perishing (o). And thou art effectively the Saviour of the body (p): And may we not trust thee in what thou hast undertaken, that trust man if we judge him faithful? yea, thou art engaged by Covenant to receive us. When we gave up our selves to thee, thou also becamest ours; and we did it on that Condition, that thou shouldest receive and save us: and it was the Condition of thine own undertaking, thou drewest the Covenant thy self, and tendred it first to us; and assumed thy own Condition, when thou imposed ours. I expect O my Saviour, but the performance of thy Covenant, and the discharge of thy undertaken Office. As thou

(m) Acts 7. 59. (n) Psal. 71. 23. 1 Pet. 18, 19.
(o) John 3. 16. (p) Ephes. 5. 23.

hast caused me to believe in thee, to love thee, to serve thee, to perform the Condition thou hast laid upon me, though with many sinful failings, which thou hast pardoned; so now thou wilt let my Soul which hath trusted on thee, have the full experience of thy fidelity; and take me to thy self, according to thy Covenant; and remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused him to hope (q). How many promises hast thou left us, that we shall not be forsaken by thee (r), but that we shall be with thee where thou art, that we may behold thy Glory (s)? For this cause art thou the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance (t), when we have done thy Will, we are to receive the Promise (v), 'tis thy (w), our Father's good pleasure to give us the Kingdom (x).

Thou art the common Refuge and Salvation of thy Servants; those that come unto thee, thou wilt in no wise cast out (y). There are now with thee the spirits of just men made perfect, that were here as im-

(q) Psal. 119. 49. (r) Heb. 13. 5. (s) John 17. 24.
 (t) Heb. 9. 15. (v) Heb. 10. 36. (w) John 20. 17.
 (x) Luke 21. 23. (y) John 6. 37.

perfect, as unworthy in themselves as I; and thou wert never unfaithful unto any that committed their Souls unto thee. O take me into their number, that we may together with Eternal Joys, give Thanks and Praise to thee that hast redeemed us to God by thy own Blood (z).

Most gracious God, thou hast design'd thy own Everlasting Glory and good Pleasure in our Salvation: our Redeemer must triumph in the perfection of his Conquest, of all his and our Enemies; and in the perfection of our Redemption. Thou wilt not lose thy Father's Glory, and thine own, that of all he hath given thee, thou shalt loose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day (a). I resign my Soul to thee, O Lord, who hath called, and chosen me, that thou mightest make known the riches of thy Glory on me, as a Vessel of Mercy prepared unto Glory (b). Thou hast predestinated me unto the Adoption of one of thy Children by Jesus Christ unto thy self, according to the good pleasure of thy Will, to the praise of thy Will, to the praise of the glory of thy Grace, wherein thou hast made me accepted in the beloved (c). Who will now present

(z) Rom. 5. 9. (a) John 6. 39. (b) Rom. 9. 23.
(c) Ephes. 1. 5, 6.

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me faultless before the presence of his Glory, with exceeding Joy: To whom be Glory, Majesty, and Dominion, and Power, now and ever, *Amen.*

Jud. 34. 25.

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